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I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. The President opened the session, noting that the Bureau of the Board had met three times, on 4 February, 16 March and 20 April. At those meetings, the Bureau had reviewed the outcome of the first regular session 1998 and the agenda for the current session, including agreement to hold an informal joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.

Progress report on the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group on a UNDP funding strategy

2. The President informed the Board that in accordance with Executive Board decision 98/3, adopted by the Board at its first regular session 1998, the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group on a UNDP funding strategy had been convened in order to develop a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP.

3. The Working Group had held five meetings. During the first meeting, the Working Group agreed upon a number of substantive issues that should be discussed during approximately 12 meetings scheduled through September 1998. The Chairman of the Working Group, Mr. Alan March, Vice-President of the Executive Board, had offered to prepare an aide-mémoire containing summaries of the main conclusions of each meeting. In order to facilitate the deliberations of the Working Group during its discussions of the several substantive issues, it was agreed that the Executive Board secretariat would prepare the required substantive inputs prior to each meeting.

4. During the second meeting, the Working Group discussed issues pertaining to paragraph 10 (b) of decision 98/3. In particular, the goals and priorities of UNDP, as specified in decisions 94/14, 95/23 and 98/1 were covered in the form of a matrix presented by the secretariat.

5. On the basis of statistical information from the secretariat, the Working Group discussed the funding situation of UNDP with a special focus on core and non-core contributions from 1986 to 1997 as well as an estimate of 1998 contributions. During that meeting, a note was presented outlining key UNDP, Economic and Social Council, and General Assembly documentation concerning funding strategies and development financing as well as a comprehensive reading list on selected background studies and reports on development financing.

6. The third and fourth meetings were devoted to guest presentations, with Ms. Inge Kaul, Director of the Office of Development Studies, and Ms. Vera P. Weill-Halle, representative of the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Washington, respectively.

7. At its fifth meeting, the Working Group discussed the draft conference paper (DP/1998/CRP.6) concerning a three-year financial forecast outlining the financial commitments of 31 December 1997. A useful and interesting debate on development needs and priorities had also been held, based on background documentation from the secretariat addressing paragraph 10 (b), items one, two and five of decision 98/3.

8. The Working Group had been progressing well, with a frank and constructive exchange of views. The strong commitment to the process shown by all participants would hopefully lead to a clear, successful conclusion once the Working Group prepared its report for the third regular session 1998. The President noted that he would report again on the progress of the Working Group at the annual session 1998.

Adoption of the agenda and agreement on the work plan

9. The Secretary of the Executive Board informed the Board that a revised version of the work plan (DP/1998/L.2) had been distributed. She noted that reference to the UNDP extension for Haiti should be added to the French version of document DP/1998/L.2. The summary of the discussion on the reports to the Economic and Social Council (item 2 of the agenda) would be prepared for the Board's approval during the session in order to ensure timely transmittal to the Council. The Secretary noted that the UNDP country cooperation frameworks and UNFPA country programmes presented at the current session would be adopted without introductions or discussion with the exception of those that had been requested by delegations for discussion. Three country cooperation frameworks and country programmes had been requested for discussion within the joint UNDP/UNFPA segment: those of Bolivia, Mali and Rwanda.

10. The Executive Board approved the following agenda for the session and the work plan (as contained in DP/1998/L.2 and Corr.1 (French only)), as orally amended:

Item 1: Organizational matters

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

Item 2: Reports to the Economic and Social Council

Items 3 & 4: Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

UNDP SEGMENT

Item 3: Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

UNFPA SEGMENT

Item 4: UNFPA: country programmes and related matters

Item 5: Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 6: Technical support services

Item 7: Staff training activities

Item 8: Resource mobilization

Item 9: Other matters

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Report on the first regular session 1998 (DP/1998/12 and Corr.1)

11. The Executive Board approved the report on the first regular session 1998 (DP/1998/12 and Corr.1).

Administrator's statement

12. The Administrator delivered an update on events of importance to UNDP since the first regular session 1998. He noted the progress achieved in the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on a Funding Strategy for UNDP and expressed his gratitude for the active participation of the Executive Board members.

13. As Chairman of the Secretary-General's Great Lakes Task Force on Relief, Reconstruction and Development, the Administrator had visited Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. He would return to the region in May 1998 for additional country visits and to attend a conference in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that the purpose of his visit had been to listen to the leaders of the region, to see how the United Nations could be most effective, to understand how leaders intended to address national as well as regional issues and to assess action that the United Nations could undertake in different capacities in the region to support their efforts. During his discussions, he had stressed the need to forge a genuine United Nations system-wide partnership with the leaders of the Great Lakes region, which was at a critical turning point in its socio-political, economic and historical development.

14. With regard to the Asian economic crisis, the Administrator cited the steps taken by UNDP to respond to the situation at the country level, particularly in Indonesia and Thailand. Country actions had been strengthened by the UNDP regional strategy that focused on policy analysis, national dialogue sessions, through the resident coordinator system, and through south-south cooperation within the region.

15. The Administrator also apprised the Executive Board of progress in the United Nations Development Group on United Nations reform and provided updates on the Global Environment Facility, UNDP relations with the European Commission, donor visits, the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the High-Level Meeting of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. He also made brief remarks concerning UNDP collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs), including that UNDP had taken first steps to establishing a committee on CSO/non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

16. One delegation queried how the regional strategy for Asia and the Pacific would contribute to easing the effects of the Asian economic crisis on programme countries in the region. The speaker also requested information on the number of female resident coordinators and the number of United Nations Houses that were currently operational.

17. Other speakers raised queries on the relationship between the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the Special Initiative on Africa and on the measures utilized by UNDP to establish partnerships with NGOs.

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18. The representative of Rwanda expressed appreciation to the Administrator for his recent visit to his country. Priorities had been identified and discussed at all levels of the Government.

19. The Administrator responded that the issues relating to the Asian economic crisis would be covered further in the informal discussion during the session. Further information would be made available during the session with regard to the other queries raised. In relation to the linkage between the Special Initiative on Africa and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process, he noted that while specialized agencies were not formally part of the process, they would participate in the pilot exercise. With regard to the participation of NGOs with UNDP, the Administrator noted that they were analysed according to their competency, resources and accountability for actions.

Executive Director's statement

20. In her opening statement, the Executive Director welcomed the opportunity to update the Executive Board on important developments that had taken place since the first regular session 1998. She highlighted the main activities of the ICPD+5 process and noted that UNFPA had prepared a conference room paper entitled "ICPD+5: Plans for the Five-year Review of the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994)" (DP/FPA/1998/CRP.1). She also informed the Executive Board that the first meeting of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH) would take place on 3-4 July 1998, in Geneva.

21. On the important issue of resources, the Executive Director stated that the resource picture was now much more optimistic than it had been when the issue was last discussed in September 1997. She thanked the major donors for their contributions and observed that several had increased their contributions. She highlighted four primary objectives of the Fund's own resource strategy as outlined in the conference room paper before the Board at that session: (a) to ensure predictable, adequate and stable growth in core resources; (b) to supplement core resources with non-core resources; (c) to expand the Fund's donor base; and (d) to increase the amount of resources currently provided by programme countries.

22. While noting that resources were the key to programme delivery and to maintaining a critical mass and stability in staff capacity, the Executive Director stated that such capacity, both in terms of the field network and headquarters support, was vital for the Fund to be able to carry out its mandated activities. In that regard, given the current strong resource situation of the Fund, the Executive Director sought the endorsement of the Executive Board for the recruitment of country representatives for seven posts that had already been approved by the Board in decision 97/26. The endorsement included the transfer of one post from headquarters to the field. While noting the need for caution and prudence in budgetary matters, she emphasized that the presence of a UNFPA country representative was crucial for successful programme implementation and decisive in improving programme delivery levels, especially in the least developed countries. She affirmed that UNFPA would continue to

deliver effective and efficient programmes while containing administrative and programme support costs.

23. Following the opening statement of the Executive Director, one delegation welcomed the update on the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health and noted that it was looking forward to the discussion on resource mobilization. Another delegation thanked the Executive Director for her comprehensive statement and welcomed the focus on resources. While expressing appreciation for the conference room paper on the plans for ICPD+5, the delegation asked how information on the outcomes of the various round tables would be disseminated.

24. A representative of the UNFPA NGO Advisory Committee made an intervention concerning the role of NGOs in the ICPD+5 review exercise. She stated that, given the ICPD commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, attention should be focused on addressing issues of gender inequity in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights. She observed that spending in that field should be counted as part of the spending on implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. She added that at both national and international levels, evidence showed that where women's organizations had played a partnership role, interesting results had materialized even when investments had been relatively modest. She stated that increased funding, at national and international levels, should be provided for programmes that empower women, enshrine their human rights and provide quality reproductive health-care services for all. The representative commended UNFPA for the way in which it had involved NGOs and civil society in the Fund's Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) process. She noted that the Fund should continue to support NGO involvement in the ICPD+5 process by including NGOs in the ICPD+5 round tables and technical meetings. She concluded by noting that the NGO Health, Empowerment, Rights and Accountability (HERA) steering committee would convene an international conference in November 1998, in Mexico City, to provide ideas and political momentum for ICPD+5 activities.

25. In her response, the Executive Director noted that the provisional agenda had been agreed to for the first meeting of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health. With regard to the ICPD+5 round tables, she stated that information on the outcomes would be widely disseminated to the members of the Executive Board, Governments and NGOs, and would be made available to the public at large through the UNFPA website on the Internet. She affirmed that the Fund had been in consultation with NGOs on the ICPD+5 review and that NGOs were participating in all the round tables. The round table scheduled to be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in July 1998, would focus on the partnership with civil society in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. She added that since ICPD, the Fund's collaboration with NGOs had increased, specially at the national level. Also, overall, women were participating much more actively in promoting the ICPD Programme of Action, and UNFPA had supported many such activities, including in the area of advocacy. The Executive Director noted that a two-day NGO Forum would precede the International Forum to be held in the Netherlands, from 8-12 February 1999.

Report on the second regular session 1998

26. The Executive Board approved that part of the report on the second regular session (contained in documents DP/1998/L.15 and DP/1998/L.16) concerning the reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1998/14 and Corr.1 and DP/FPA/1998/2 and Corr.1 (French only)).

Future sessions

27. The Secretary informed the Executive Board that advance copies of the documentation for the annual session 1998 would be available on the UNDP homepage via Internet. The work plan would be revised and distributed at the pre-session informal to be held on 26 May 1998. She noted that the first regular session 1999 had been rescheduled to 25-29 January 1999.

28. The Executive Board agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998 and 1999 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Annual session 1998:	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998:	14-18 September 1998
First regular session 1999:	25-29 January 1999
Second regular session 1999:	5-9 April 1999
Annual session 1999:	14-25 June 1999 (New York)
Third regular session 1999:	13-17 September 1999

29. The Executive Board agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the annual session 1998 of the Board, as listed in the work plan 1998 and revised on the basis of the decisions taken by the Board at its first two regular sessions.

Joint segment

II. REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

A. UNDP

UNDP report

30. The Administrator introduced the report to the Economic and Social Council for UNDP (DP/1998/14 and Corr.1). He noted that it was prepared in a common format, jointly agreed upon by UNDP, UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The report came at a particularly important time as 1998 would be a determining year with regard to the functioning of UNDP as well as to the nature and level of operational activities for development of the United Nations system as a whole. The triennial comprehensive policy review was under preparation, an exercise that would lead

to Economic and Social Council and General Assembly resolutions evaluating the performance of UNDP and setting the strategy for United Nations development operations in the years to come. The report also highlighted the challenges UNDP, as all other development organizations, must face as it pursued its broad mandate in poverty eradication at a time when multilateral resources for development were declining.

31. He noted that the length of the report was constrained by Executive Board requirements and also that detailed information on the subjects covered in the report would be available in the annual report of the Administrator, to be submitted at the annual session 1998.

32. The triennial comprehensive policy review was currently in a state of advanced preparation and represented an opportunity to assess in detail many of the issues arising from operational activities that had been informally raised by Member States, including at the Economic and Social Council. UNDP had responded in detail to the questionnaires of the review and was collaborating with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the preparation of the report to the Council and to the General Assembly. The Administrator emphasized that the starting point for the review should be the Secretary-General's reform programme as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/12 A and B.

33. The Administrator gave an overview of three areas for discussion in connection with the report to the Economic and Social Council: the United Nations presence at the country level; the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; and funding issues.

34. The Secretary-General's reform had been instrumental in strengthening the United Nations presence at the country level through the resident coordinator system pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/209, 47/199 and 50/120. Discussions among the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) members and its Executive Committee were proceeding with regard to strengthening the resident coordinator system. As manager and funder of the resident coordinator system, and in view of the legislated link between the UNDP Resident Representative and the Resident Coordinator, as reaffirmed by the Secretary-General, UNDP was pursuing, with other programmes and funds, policies and concrete measures to strengthen the overall resident coordinator system. Measures in that respect included: widening the pool of qualified candidates (in the preceding year 11 out of 35 persons selected as resident coordinators had come from organizations other than UNDP); more specific competency assessments and appraisal methodologies; and comprehensive strategies to expand common premises and services.

35. UNDP had embarked, with the other UNDG members, on 18 pilot United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). The first joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF had been held in January 1998 to look at the pilot UNDAF experience of Viet Nam. An informal joint meeting to follow up on the January meeting would be held during the present session of the Board. One issue that had arisen at the first regular session was the need for more work in streamlining programming instruments of various funds and programmes, with the overall aim of beginning the UNDAF at the start of a common programming

cycle. Greater streamlining in the process was needed. UNDP believed that national ownership was essential to ensure conformity with the priorities of programme countries in which all United Nations system activities were anchored. A review of the UNDAF pilot process would commence in July 1998.

36. While the issue of funding was not discussed in detail in the report to the Economic and Social Council, the important process under the leadership of the Executive Board should be noted. The Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group was a very important mechanism in forging and intensifying the partnership with traditional and emerging donors, programme countries, the Secretariat and the Executive Board.

37. The Administrator noted that UNDP had continued to collaborate closely with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and at the country level, the capacity of the resident coordinator system was strengthened to support an expanded response to the epidemic. Increased funding and further mainstreaming was needed for enhanced normative and operational activities relating to HIV/AIDS.

38. On the follow-up to global conferences, in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/6, the Administrator pointed out that the inter-agency task forces created by the Administrative Committee on Coordination had served to encourage inter-agency teams at the country level, working under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. As the task forces had been replaced by less formal networking arrangements, the UNDAF was essential to retaining their momentum. The global conferences had produced a profound effect on UNDP, including making poverty eradication the overriding objective of UNDP work. The fusion of normative arrangements at the global level had played a role in guiding the country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) as well as the UNDAF pilot exercises.

Discussion

39. Many delegations took the floor to comment on the report. They thanked the Administrator for his opening remarks, which provided analysis and information additional to the report. Most speakers encouraged UNDP to include more analysis, including charts and figures, and less description in future reports to the Economic and Social Council. The report should highlight the major points on which the Council could provide advice as well as identify problems. One delegation emphasized that the reports should help to enable progress in poverty eradication efforts in programme countries. Another delegation, supported by many others, requested that UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF prepare a consolidated list of actions on which the Council could provide advice to the funds and programmes for submission to the Council's 1998 substantive session. WFP could also be included in the exercise.

40. Several speakers welcomed the inclusion of information on the work of UNDG and on UNDAF in the report and Administrator's statement. The need to increase coordination, avoid overlap and ensure cost-effectiveness was emphasized. Further information on the differentiation among the programming instruments of the UNDAF, the country strategy note and the CCF was requested. United Nations specialized agencies must participate in the UNDAF process, according to many

delegations. One delegation requested further information on the legal framework for the UNDG at the country level. Another underlined that the UNDAF should be under the leadership of the programme country and reflect ownership by that country. Information on how the sustainable human development mandate of UNDP fitted in with the mandates of UNFPA and UNICEF in the UNDAF process was requested. One delegation requested more information on the delays in implementing common services at the country level.

41. Measures taken to strengthen the resident coordinator system were welcomed. Those measures included the expansion of the pool of candidates for resident coordinator, including through staff secondments and enhanced selection and review criteria. A query was raised regarding the number of resident coordinators who came from other organizations in 1994 versus 1998 and how many women resident coordinators were currently serving. The issue of funding of the resident coordinator system would be discussed by the Economic and Social Council and during the triennial comprehensive policy review in the General Assembly. Several delegations commented on the funding and management of the resident coordinator system, with some suggesting that the costs for support of the system be shared among involved organizations. One delegation expressed support for the continued designation of the UNDP Resident Representative as United Nations Resident Coordinator. Another delegation requested information on the designation of humanitarian coordinators who were different from the resident coordinator in a particular country.

42. One delegation, supported by another, requested systematic inclusion of sections on relations with the Bretton Woods institutions and on the preparations for participation in the humanitarian segment in future reports.

43. Many delegations expressed the view that concrete examples of lessons learned and good practices should have been included in the section on capacity-building and national execution, as well as with regard to the harmonization of programming cycles. Greater efforts were required to determine the common understanding of the definitions of capacity-building and national execution. Several delegations expressed their commitment to national execution. The need to refer to South-South cooperation in relation to national execution was mentioned by some speakers.

44. The emphasis on programme countries setting their own priorities was underlined by some delegations. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) statement on "Development Partnerships in the New Global Context" (May 1995) was a useful reference in that regard.

45. The work to improve monitoring and evaluation activities was praised. However, more work was required in that area, in particular in relation to the CCFs, and with regard to updating current methods in light of the work of the UNDG. While enhanced project compliance was noted in some regions, others needed further efforts to increase compliance. Several speakers looked forward to receiving the evaluation compliance report at the annual session 1998. Queries were raised on progress in undertaking joint strategic evaluations and on the concept of rating of agencies mentioned on page 70 of the publication "Measuring and Managing Results: Lessons for Development Cooperation".

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46. Several delegations expressed their support for UNDP funding of training activities held at the Staff College in Turin.

47. With reference to the cooperation of UNDP with civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations, one delegation questioned the reference contained in paragraph 58 of the document on the shift from representative to participatory democracy, stating that in his country's view that interpretation was outside of the domain of the Executive Board.

48. Comments from the secretariat on the progress of decentralized authority would be welcomed.

49. Some speakers asked for clarification of paragraph 44 of the document, stating that their delegations still had questions about the concept of multi-year contributions as a model for funding arrangements. One delegation requested that if reference to burden-sharing was included, then the report should also mention the possibility of maintaining voluntary funding arrangements. Other measures could be explored, including through the private sector.

50. Progress in the follow-up to global conferences was noted by many delegations. One speaker requested further information on the degree to which resident coordinators were incorporating the programmes of action resulting from the conferences in country-level programming. Another speaker asked for information on the linkage and coordination of the work of the various inter-agency bodies on follow-up to conferences. One delegation requested further information on the "20/20" event in Hanoi and a copy of the report on social exclusion. Further references to the role of South-South cooperation in the follow-up to the World Summit on Social Development would be welcomed.

51. Some delegations stated that they were of the view that the contribution of UNDP to the field of human rights should emphasize the right to development and refer to work with programme countries in addressing poverty eradication. Speakers underlined the need for UNDP to avoid conditionality in its work.

52. Requests were made for more information on lessons learned from inter-agency cooperation in fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

53. Two delegations believed that the report should have included reference to the narrowing of the UNDP programme focus.

Response by the secretariat

54. The Administrator welcomed the proposal for a consolidated report by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF to the Economic and Social Council.

55. With regard to the UNDAF process, he noted that United Nations specialized agencies were not yet formally participating in the process. The Administrative Committee on Coordination would need to agree formally on the inclusion of the specialized agencies in the UNDAF process. The linkage between the UNDAF and the resident coordinator system at the country level would need to be worked out. In response to a query, he stated that UNDP did not create country

strategy notes in cases where the Government did not wish to have one. The CSN was a government-owned document and could be seen as representing the "demand side" of development cooperation whereas the UNDAF represented the supply-side response by the United Nations operational entities. The UNDAF was the equivalent of a UNDP advisory note, he stated, and could possibly replace that note at a future date. In response to a query, he noted that sustainable human development was an overarching concept that was applicable to most development assistance. He hoped that the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board could convene future joint meetings with the UNICEF Board as the UNDAF experience progressed.

56. In response to the comments made, he emphasized that resident coordinators did not want to be cut off from UNDP, which through its programme and administrative funding provided essential support for coordination. Seven resident coordinators had written to the Secretary-General on the necessity of having UNDP as an organizational base from which to operate the resident coordinator function. In response to the delegations who had suggested cost-sharing of the resident coordinator system, the Administrator stated that cost-sharing of the support office at the country level would be welcomed as UNDP was currently responsible for funding the offices. However, UNDP had a mandate from the Secretary-General for funding and managing the resident coordinator system on behalf of the United Nations system. In line with that mandate, UNDP would need to continue to provide central funding for the resident coordinator to ensure the unity of management and funding as well as accountability.

57. The Administrator cited the following figures: of 131 resident coordinators, 11 out of 35 designated in 1997 were from organizations outside of UNDP, a figure which had resulted in the doubling of resident coordinators from outside the organization; 30 of the 131 resident coordinators were women; the goal for women resident coordinators was 40 per cent by the year 2001; 41 out of 131 resident coordinators had worked outside of UNDP in their careers; there were currently four United Nations houses - in Lebanon, Lesotho, Malawi and South Africa; and 30 other premises were virtually ready for designation as United Nations houses.

58. Inter-agency collaboration existed in the area of monitoring and evaluation, the Administrator noted, but strategic evaluations were needed. He expressed disappointment about the lack of progress in harmonization, an area that required greater encouragement from intergovernmental processes.

59. In response to the clarifications sought, the Administrator noted that the paper on multi-year funding referred to in paragraph 44 of the report had been requested by the office of the Secretary-General as an input from UNDP for the report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council on the financing of operational activities.

60. Progress had been seen on developing a common understanding of national execution and capacity-building. New guidelines for national execution had been developed through an inter-agency process. UNDP had contributed chapters on national execution and the programme approach to the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions manual on operational activities.

61. He noted that a full report on the dissemination of information to country offices regarding the follow-up to global conferences would be made available to the Executive Board at the present session. He informed the Board that at the special session of the Economic and Social Council in May, UNDP would make a special presentation on collaboration with the OECD/DAC, the World Bank and the United Nations in the development of indicators to monitor progress in meeting the goals of international conferences.

62. In response to the query raised, he noted that the concept of agency ratings mentioned in the joint UNDP/Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) publication "Measuring and Managing Results: Lessons for Development Cooperation" merely implied that if aid agencies had a uniform rating system for assessing their respective activities, it could provide a basis for comparing the performance of the assistance they provided in different fields. An upcoming headquarters and country-level workshop in Santo Domingo would examine the lessons of the report as they applied to UNDP.

63. With regard to the comments on the human rights policy document, he underlined that UNDP assistance was unconditional and that programme countries had the right to be free from poverty. He agreed that the humanitarian segment was a key part of the Economic and Social Council session, especially in the current year, when the linkage with development would be discussed. Progress in decentralization was also worth examining, he stated, noting that UNDP had decentralized most of its programming operations except for the approval of the CCF.

64. The Associate Administrator stated that UNDP would endeavour to incorporate the suggestions made by delegations at the present session in the report of the following year. He noted that the time-frame of some CCFs had been adjusted in order to enable harmonization of programming cycles among the funds and programmes. There had been some progress in harmonization with regard to the presentation of budget formats among the funds and programmes. Direct execution, he underlined, was an exception which occurred in countries in special development situations where rapid delivery was needed or where the Government had requested UNDP to take action.

B. UNFPA

UNFPA report

65. In introducing the Report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/1998/2 and Corr.1 (French only)), the Executive Director noted that the report had been prepared in the format jointly agreed to by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Food Programme. The report covered a wide range of issues, including funding arrangements, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up of the major United Nations conferences and summits. In response to a request of the Executive Board, the report included updated information on the work of UNFPA in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention.

66. The Executive Director underscored the Fund's strong commitment to the implementation of various General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions of the Executive Board on operational activities, as well as the Fund's active participation in and commitment to the Secretary-General's programme of reform. With the support and guidance of the Executive Board, UNFPA continued to put into practice the long-standing commitment to coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs and priorities of all partner countries. The Executive Director noted that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) pilot phase was an important part of those efforts. She stated that it was already clear that the UNDAF process facilitated a coordination of approach regarding data systems, situational analyses, monitoring and follow-up reporting to conferences. Overall, that would lead to a more solid basis for the formulation of programmes of assistance to a given country. The Executive Director observed that continued common attention was directed to issues relating to national execution and the shared goal of strengthening national capacity. UNFPA had brought to the attention of other members of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) lessons learned from its experience in that area.

67. Several delegations stated that the UNFPA report to the Economic and Social Council was clear and comprehensive. Delegations welcomed, in particular, the focus on the UNDAF, the United Nations resident coordinator system and the Fund's commitment to the United Nations reform process. A few delegations observed that the report should be more analytical. One delegation noted that the report should have more substance. Some delegations noted that additional information on the follow-up to the ICPD and progress achieved by UNDG should also have been included.

68. One delegation, commending the analytical approach of the UNFPA report, noted that it captured the work of the Fund succinctly and comprehensively. The delegation added that the report clearly expressed the challenges and opportunities that UNFPA faced. The same delegation noted that the report should include more information on ICPD follow-up. The delegation also recommended that UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF should prepare, for submission to the upcoming session of the Economic and Social Council, a consolidated list of areas where intergovernmental action regarding funds and programmes was needed and would, the delegation noted, greatly assist delegations in structuring their comments for the triennial review of operational activities. The same delegation was pleased to note the importance accorded to UNDG, the piloting phase of UNDAF and to the strengthening of the resident coordinator system. The delegation commended the measures undertaken to establish ownership of the system by participating agencies, including expanding the selection pool for resident coordinators and refining the terms of reference to ensure the greatest possible impartiality and neutrality; the secondment of staff from agencies other than UNDP to UNDG; greater harmonization of programming cycles and procedures; and increased use of common services and common premises. On the issue of financing for development, the delegation observed that alternatives to assessed or multi-year contributions should be explored, including a greater role for the private sector.

69. Another delegation, while welcoming the Fund's observations on the UNDAF process and noting their usefulness to the Economic and Social Council, noted that it was not fully satisfied with the report, which needed to be more analytical and less descriptive. The delegation observed that additional

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information on the follow-up to ICPD should have been included. Another delegation, noting that the report should be more problem-oriented, stated that it should include recommendations for action to be taken by the Council. The same delegation added that the report should include information on the Fund's relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions and noted that there should be a recommendation from the Executive Board to the Council suggesting systematic reporting in the future on collaboration with these institutions. The delegation added that future reports should also contain a specific section on operational activities in the area of humanitarian assistance. Another delegation inquired about what could be done to increase collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions.

70. Another delegation observed that the annual reports to the Economic and Social Council were particularly important because of the upcoming triennial policy review of operational activities and the role that the Council played in that review. Noting the key role played by UNFPA in the follow-up to ICPD, the delegation stated that it would have welcomed a reference in the report to the ICPD+5 process. The delegation welcomed the Fund's efforts to increase national capacity-building and encouraged UNFPA to continue that work, which would help to ensure country ownership, programme sustainability and enhanced impact of United Nations development projects and programmes. The same delegation also welcomed the Fund's efforts to decentralize activities further to the field and noted that the Council needed to consider the question of the harmonization of overall system-wide decentralization, including that of the specialized agencies. On the subject of the Fund's enhanced collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions, the delegation asked how the collegial relations with the institutions translated into policy and programming actions at the institutional and country levels. The delegation commended the progress made by UNFPA in promoting national execution. The delegation suggested including a discussion on the use of direct execution at a future Executive Board session. With regard to monitoring and evaluation, the delegation suggested that UNFPA adopt evaluation compliance reports that should be submitted to the Board for discussion, as was the case for UNDP. The delegation also inquired about the progress made in joint, strategic evaluations with other institutions, including the World Bank, as called for in General Assembly resolution 50/120.

71. One delegation, while expressing its appreciation for the activities being undertaken within the UNDAF, noted that even at that early stage, it would like to see strong monitoring and evaluation of those activities. The same delegation drew attention to paragraph 5 of the UNFPA report and commended the Fund for succinctly delineating key areas in which further efforts were needed for strengthening the resident coordinator system. Another delegation also noted that it attached great importance to the UNDAF process and to strengthening collaboration among United Nations funds and programmes, the World Bank, donors and other development partners. It underscored the desirability of UNFPA focusing on its areas of comparative advantage.

72. Another delegation, while welcoming the Fund's commitment to the United Nations reform process, noted that the experience of UNDAF viewed from the perspective of UNDP appeared to be quite different from that of UNFPA. The delegation stated that it shared the concerns that had been expressed in the report of the Fund and asked to know more about the modalities being devised

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within the context of UNDG to address the problems encountered by small organizations such as UNFPA. The same delegation stated that it strongly supported the idea contained in paragraph 4 of the UNFPA report that the UNDAF exercise should not duplicate past programming efforts or require a review of processes that had already been completed.

73. One delegation noted that there were some concerns associated with the UNDAF and the UNDG For example, the legal framework of the UNDG should be examined. With regard to the resident coordinator system, the delegation stated that the mode of the relationship with the host country should be delineated as some problems had been encountered in relations with counterparts. The delegation also inquired about the cost implications and cost-effectiveness of the UNDAF and about the relationship of the country strategy note (CSN), UNDAF and the national planning framework. The delegation underscored that the national planning framework should not be diluted by the CSN and UNDAF.

74. Another delegation, expressing its appreciation for the information the Fund had provided regarding strengthening the resident coordinator system, noted that more information should be given on the harmonization of country programmes. The delegation added that the figures on resources in paragraphs 22-26 of the document did not represent firm commitments. The delegation added that with reference to paragraph 15, additional information should have been included on the problems encountered in the Fund's technical support services (TSS) arrangements.

75. One delegation, while commending the report for being well prepared, stated that at a time when many developing countries were suffering economic hardships and their development efforts were being hampered, it was important to enhance and not diminish the role of UNFPA and UNDP. Noting that national execution should be both accelerated and taken more seriously, the delegation stated that there should be objective evaluations of national execution capability, and bureaucratic procedures within organizations should not be allowed to inhibit national execution.

76. Another delegation, while observing that the UNDAF and the resident coordinator system were good mechanisms and the core of the United Nations reform process, noted that ownership of the development process by programme countries should be fully respected. The same delegation commended the Fund for employing local experts in developing countries and stated that that policy should be fully implemented and national execution should be increased. The delegation expressed concern at the shortage of core resources and the consequences of that on UNFPA and UNDP programmes. The delegation urged donors to show greater corporate responsibility in that regard.

77. One delegation, speaking also on behalf of two others, noted that the reports to the Economic and Social Council should be focused and analytical documents and should point out areas where collaboration could be strengthened. The delegation added that the UNFPA report under consideration marked an improvement over past such reports in that it highlighted lessons learned. Another delegation also commended the Fund for having included various lessons learned in the report.

78. Another delegation noted that it shared the Fund's concerns expressed in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the report regarding strengthening the resident coordinator system to enable it to provide better coordination and effective support at the country level. Another delegation observed the importance of simplifying the programming process and avoiding another layer of bureaucracy.

79. One delegation noted that the reports to the Economic and Social Council should make some contribution towards addressing the poverty indicators of any country. Concomitantly, the reports should be more analytical. Recognizing that it may be difficult to cover a range of issues given the page limitation of the document, the delegation recommended selecting a few key issues and analysing them more thoroughly. The same delegation supported the Fund's adding resources for and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS prevention activities. The delegation underscored the merit of UNDP and UNFPA preparing an additional one-page note delineating key issues that could be discussed by the Council at its upcoming session.

80. Another delegation agreed that a short note listing key issues pertaining to improved coordination of operational activities should be prepared for submission to the Economic and Social Council. The delegation suggested that such a note could be prepared by the UNDG. With regard to monitoring and evaluation, the same delegation asked for information on how the Fund's Office of Oversight and Evaluation (OOE) helped UNFPA in assessing programme experience and, in particular, whether the OOE drew out and synthesized lessons learned from evaluations and shared these with the rest of the Fund.

81. The Executive Director thanked the delegations for their constructive comments. She noted that the suggestion to submit a short list of key issues for consideration by the Economic and Social Council was a very useful one. She also agreed with the suggestion that the decentralization process was an important item for further discussion. She noted that UNFPA was issuing a letter to its field offices reminding them that they had decentralized authority within the limits of the approved country programme and subprogrammes. With regard to monitoring and evaluation, the Executive Director noted that many steps had been taken to harmonize those processes and that the issue was also being addressed by such system-wide mechanisms as the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) and an Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation. She agreed that joint evaluations were a good way of reviewing programmes and projects and that joint thematic evaluations needed to be carried out. On the topic of national capacity-building, the Executive Director observed that the Fund had put the item on the agenda of UNDG. Also, at the annual session of the Board, the Fund would present a report on the absorptive capacity of programme countries. With regard to national execution, she underscored the importance of addressing the needs of national partners. The Executive Director noted that it was the Fund's goal to have full national execution; however, that required addressing various issues, including financial reporting and auditing in countries. She noted that additional information on the follow-up to ICPD could have been provided, but the Fund had sought to report on items that involved inter-agency collaboration.

82. With regard to the coordinated follow-up to conferences, the Executive Director noted that the recommendations of the three inter-agency task forces of

the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) had been adopted by CCPOQ and a letter from the Chair had been sent out to all concerned. She observed that further efforts were needed to increase utilization by the field offices of the outputs of the task forces. The Executive Director noted that in her meetings with resident coordinators she drew attention to the following key points: the centrality of the UNDAF process; the importance of a common data system; gender as a key issue around which the whole system could work; the usefulness of thematic groups not simply as forums for information exchange but as an important means of identifying programming gaps and duplications, as well as a venue for policy dialogue involving all development partners, including the Government and non-governmental organizations; the importance of policy and programme reviews involving all members of the United Nations country team; and the key role of the resident coordinator system in promoting a coordinated follow-up to global conferences.

83. In responding to the comments and questions of delegations, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) underscored that UNFPA was firmly committed to the UNDAF and the resident coordinator system. He noted that the report to the Economic and Social Council had sought to identify areas that needed attention, notably through the UNDG process, including problems resulting from the dual responsibility of the United Nations Resident Coordinator also being the UNDP Resident Representative. The Deputy Executive Director stated that UNFPA was committed to the promotion of national execution of country programmes as evidenced by the increasing amount of resources being channelled through this execution modality, from 31 per cent of country programme resources in 1996 to 41 per cent in 1997. He added that the Fund's programming process was based on decentralized authority, which had evolved incrementally through a number of stages, including an initial pilot phase. He noted that full decentralization of programming authority required strengthening country offices in terms of staff and infrastructure, streamlining guidelines, training staff at country and headquarters levels, and improving management information systems. With regard to humanitarian assistance, the Deputy Executive Director observed that since the Executive Board had authorized the Fund to provide emergency assistance for the first time in 1994 (decision 94/25), UNFPA had been providing such assistance through executing agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. On the subject of relations with the Bretton Woods institutions, he noted that UNFPA worked very closely with them on operational and policy matters. The Fund's Geographical Divisions regularly consulted with the World Bank to avoid duplications in programming and to identify gaps that could be addressed. The Fund also had technical consultations with the World Bank and would be a co-partner on reproductive-health training.

84. Responding to the query concerning the function of the UNFPA Office of Oversight and Evaluation, he noted that one main function of the OOE was to undertake thematic evaluations and synthesize the lessons learned. In addition, the OOE took into account other findings and lessons learned, for example, those deriving from audits and policy application reviews. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) concluded by thanking delegations for their encouraging and constructive comments.

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85. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

98/5. UNDP/UNFPA reports to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1998/14 and Corr.1 and DP/FPA/1998/2 and Corr.1 (French only)) and of the recommendations therein and decides to transmit them to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments made by delegations and statements and answers given by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund at the present session;

2. Calls on the Administrator and Executive Director to provide in future reports to the Economic and Social Council: a thorough analysis of problems encountered and lessons learned in the field; a focus on issues that will permit the Council to fulfil its coordinating role; and, in this context, to present relevant statistical data in a consolidated manner;

3. Invites the Administrator and Executive Director to consult with other members of the United Nations Development Group on a consolidated list of issues central to the improved coordination of operational activities for submission to and consideration by the Economic and Social Council during its 1998 substantive session;

4. Also invites the Economic and Social Council to recommend, at its 1998 substantive session, actions intended to increase the usefulness of these reports as inputs to the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council, as called for in General Assembly resolution 48/162, by, inter alia, considering whether any issues in the current format are suitable for joint recommendations by the funds and programmes.

24 April 1998

III. UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

A. Three-year financial forecast outlining the financial commitments as of 31 December 1997

86. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Planning and Resources Management introduced the report on the three-year financial forecast outlining the financial commitments as of 31 December 1997 (DP/1998/CRP.6). He noted that many delegations had already reviewed and discussed the report at the 13 April 1998 meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on a Funding Strategy for UNDP.

87. As reflected in the paper, despite an unpredictable core-funding situation, the Administrator continued to manage responsibly the programming and delivery of the core resources placed at his disposal. According to Executive Board decision 95/23, the level of core resources originally envisaged during the three-year planning period 1997-1999 was $3.3 billion. At the present time,

three years after the adoption of decision 95/23, and half way through the planning period, the figure was estimated to be $2.3 billion, or 30 per cent less. Excess liquidity built up during the fifth programming cycle was no longer an issue as careful management of core programme build-up and delivery had enabled the expected substantial depletion of the balance of liquid core resources by the end of the year.

88. The critical mass of core funding that UNDP relied on to promote sustainable human development was in serious jeopardy. The annual funding base of UNDP therefore needed to be urgently restored to a predictable, adequate and sustainable level if the organization was to have the desired country-level impact mandated by the Executive Board. In that regard, UNDP very much welcomed and supported the work of the Open-Ended Working Group. In the short term, UNDP sought the support of the Board to reverse the downward trend of core resources in 1998. In the medium term, UNDP stood ready with viable sustainable human development programmes and projects at the level originally foreseen in decision 95/23, so that by the year 2000, the organization could operate at a level of $1.1 billion in annual voluntary contributions, if secured.

89. UNDP would continue to inform the Executive Board, both formally and informally, about the above-mentioned issues as well as other related matters during the discussion leading up to the review of the successor programming arrangements at the third regular session 1998, at which time a more comprehensive analysis would be made available for consideration.

90. One delegation stated that it was not convinced that the report respected the intention of the Executive Board in its request for a three-year financial forecast but rather focused on the financial problems of UNDP. His delegation would examine the matter further in the context of the Open-Ended Working Group, to which UNDP had made excellent inputs.

91. Another speaker underlined that without the required resources or the efforts to increase delivery, the organization could not succeed in its mission. He noted the concern expressed in previous Executive Board sessions about the sharp fall in contributions to UNDP core resources. The decline demonstrated the decrease in donor confidence concerning UNDP. The continued fluctuation in programme delivery did not generate confidence in UNDP. The speaker hoped that donors would increase their contributions. He underlined that the core budget was the bedrock of UNDP funding. If non-core contributions were allowed to dominate the funding of the organization then there would be an impact on the neutrality and universality of UNDP, those qualities that made it a preferred partner for developing countries.

92. Another delegation emphasized that it was a difficult time for funding organizations to operate, given the decline in official development assistance, and it was also a difficult time for emerging donors. It was unfortunate that the decline in core contributions had implications for the programming role and sustainability of country cooperation frameworks approved by the Executive Board. The situation was frustrating and was obviously felt very acutely at the country level. A system for country cooperation frameworks based on realistic and available resources was required.

93. One speaker welcomed the conference room paper and stated that her delegation would contribute its views at the Open-Ended Working Group on Funding.

94. Another delegation noted the adverse impact on development resulting from the decline in contributions to UNDP and the failure to meet the indicative figure referred to in Executive Board decision 95/23. The speaker was concerned that the total core contribution in 1998 of $740 million was compromising the critical mass of core funding needed to sustain core development activities. The Board must engage in decision-making relating to resource mobilization and the implementation of programmes. Methods must be sought to achieve the minimum required figure and revise programmes upwards to ensure predictability and strengthen the image of UNDP as a reliable development partner.

95. The Executive Board took note of the report on the three-year financial forecast outlining the financial commitments as of 31 December 1997 (DP/1998/CRP.6) and the comments made thereon.

B. Country cooperation frameworks

96. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for Côte d'Ivoire (DP/CCF/IVC/1), the Gambia (DP/CCF/GAM/1), Guinea (DP/CCF/GUI/1), Togo (DP/CCF/TOG/1), Bahrain (DP/CCF/BAH/1), Albania (DP/CCF/ALB/1), and the Turks and Caicos Islands (DP/CCF/TCI/1). The Board also approved the first extension of the fifth country programme for Niger (DP/CP/NER/5/EXTENSION I), the second extension of the third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda (DP/CP/ANT/3/EXTENSION II), and the second extension of the fifth country programme for Haiti (DP/CP/HAI/5/EXTENSION II).

97. The President of the Executive Board noted that, for technical reasons, and at the request of the Government, the first CCF for the Cayman Islands (DP/CCF/CAY/1) had been withdrawn and would be resubmitted to the Executive Board at a later session.

General remarks

98. The President opened the floor for brief comments and requests for clarification. The delegations of Albania, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Niger expressed their gratitude for the Executive Board's approval of the above-mentioned CCFs and country programme extensions. They also commended the various UNDP bureaux and country offices in programme countries for their work.

99. One delegation, speaking on behalf of five other delegations, shared general concerns arising from the review of the vast majority of CCFs submitted to the Executive Board to date. The delegation noted that UNDP had been requested repeatedly to focus its activities on what the organization did best, which would improve UNDP impact at the country level, as well as facilitate resource mobilization efforts through the shaping of a distinctive profile of UNDP. In light of recent progress made towards greater cohesion of United Nations activities at the country level in the context of reform, the importance

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of narrowing the focus of UNDP was further underlined as a way to enable UNDP to prepare for much closer collaboration with its partner United Nations agencies.

100. It was the view of the six delegations that the swift implementation by UNDP of decision 98/1 of 23 January 1998 on narrowing the focus should constitute one of the most important priorities of the Administrator. The quality of the UNDP product would influence decisions in the countries of the six delegations - and perhaps in many other donor countries - to increase or even maintain their current level of contributions.

101. In its decision 98/1, the Executive Board unconditionally endorsed eight guiding principles that addressed both the substantive focus of UNDP and principles of programming. All eight principles were to be applied in CCFs and mid-term reviews beginning in January 1999. The CCFs at the present session continued to contain many proposed UNDP interventions that went beyond the capacity-building role endorsed by the Executive Board as guiding principle number 1. Furthermore, very few CCFs contained any information on how UNDP complemented the work of other providers of development services, as guiding principle 3 had requested. More information was provided about the related activities of other donors in the UNFPA country programmes than in the UNDP CCFs, despite the Executive Board's clear endorsement of guiding principle 4 that UNDP should support the aid coordination efforts of Governments in programme countries.

102. In some CCFs, however, there were explicit references in the sections on lessons learned to overall evaluations of the last programme cycle. The six delegations welcomed that trend towards fulfilling guiding principle number 7, and encouraged the Administrator to make CCF evaluations a standard practice.

103. The CCFs in general failed to identify the desired impact, as requested by the Executive Board through its endorsement of guiding principle number 8. Others had articulated the need to demonstrate such impact and the delegation would not reiterate the arguments at the current session.

104. While the six delegations were aware that the guiding principles would come into effect in January 1999, they wished to avail themselves of the opportunity to state that the shortcomings discussed above should be corrected by that date. As requested by the Executive Board, a changed structure or format was required for future CCFs. The new standard would also meet the delegations' expectations for the anticipated ingredients of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

105. The six delegations viewed the changed format of the CCF as an important element for arriving at a successful conclusion of the open-ended, ad hoc working group on the UNDP funding strategy. It was imperative that the efforts of that group produce an agreed method for establishing year-by-year a rolling overall funding target for UNDP. In their view, the funding target could be derived only from CCFs that were recosted and clearly consistent with the focus of the organization and consistent with joint expectations of the kind of role UNDP should be expected to play. It would be on that basis that programme countries could rightfully expect donor countries to honour the commitments they

had undertaken by participating in the approval of the CCFs at the Executive Board.

106. The Associate Administrator assured delegations that UNDP had taken careful note of the statement made by the six delegations. Following the adoption of decision 98/1, specific instructions had been provided to ensure that the CCFs that would be submitted to the Executive Board as of January 1999 onwards adhered strictly to the guiding principles. The instructions that had been communicated would be reflected in the new advisory notes under preparation. In addition, the Programme Management Oversight Committee maintained a checklist to assist in the review of various programme documents; that checklist had been amended to include the new elements arising from decision 98/1. The new programming manual to be issued would similarly reflect the changes made in light of that decision. Executive Board decision 98/1 and the guiding principles would also form the basis for the review of the successor programming arrangements. As UNDP undertook the review, the guiding principles would be used as a yardstick by which the organization could measure where it stood in terms of the successor programming arrangements. To ensure a sharper focus for the next generation of CCFs, in the course of the triennial reviews of each CCF, the guiding principles would again be the yardstick by which to determine where they each stood and how they should be refocused.

107. The Associate Administrator hoped that with those changes the donor countries would be able not only to maintain but to increase their contribution levels. He also hoped that UNDP would not experience the same situation as it had at the time of the adoption of the successor arrangements, when there had been an understanding that if the successor arrangements were adopted by the Executive Board, there would be additional resources forthcoming.

IV. UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

108. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted that the Executive Board had before it 26 country programmes and one extension of an ongoing programme. Three of the country programmes, those for Bolivia, Mali and Rwanda, would be considered in a joint segment with UNDP. She provided the Board with a brief update of some relevant developments within the Fund with regard to programmes, noting that in the previous 18 months the Fund had processed for approval by the Board 72 new country programmes and 8 extensions of ongoing programmes. Although that had been a demanding period for UNFPA, the focused attention to programme development had helped the Fund to evolve in several ways. It had assisted in advancing conceptual and strategic thinking, and had given direction to the development of operational tools and procedures which responded better to the needs of the countries as well as the field offices. During that period, the Fund had also undertaken several other major exercises, including some organizational changes and streamlining of functions within headquarters; a revision of guidelines, with due attention to system-wide reform initiatives; and an ongoing in-depth review of the Fund's financial management system. Those initiatives were linked to supporting increased decentralization of authority to the field, and aimed to provide better technical and policy guidance to UNFPA field offices while ensuring that the tools for developing and managing country

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programmes were in place. The initiatives also included the refinement of monitoring and evaluation tools for measuring progress.

109. The subprogramme approach had begun to address one of the main weaknesses of past programmes, namely, the fragmentation of programme activities. Under the subprogramme approach, UNFPA had institutionalized the early involvement of major stakeholders in operationalizing the country programme. That involved consensus-building and a joint planning process between the key players, leading to the establishment of a framework under which a comprehensive and unified set of programme activities would be supported. In addition, the subprogramme approach was designed to reduce much of the repetition and bureaucratic paper work related to the formulation and approval of individual projects.

110. The Deputy Executive Director stated that the application of the logical framework techniques had assisted UNFPA staff in focusing on deliverable outputs; in considering at an early stage the means of measuring progress; and in ensuring that the necessary infrastructure was in place for the implementation of the programme. Although it was too early to comment on the outcome of the approaches adopted, encouraging signs were visible. She noted that the country programmes were closely aligned to the resource allocation system, with comprehensive programmes in category A countries and selected interventions in category B and C countries. In developing the programmes, an effort had been made to respond to national priorities and capacities in implementing the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action; to target interventions where UNFPA had a comparative advantage; and to take into consideration the activities of other development partners. In accordance with the objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action, the country programmes promoted the principles of reproductive choice and gender empowerment.

111. The Chief, Executive Board Branch, Information and External Relations Division, informed the Executive Board that a corrigendum (Corr.1) had been issued for document DP/FPA/PRK/3. One delegation sought clarification on the corrigendum concerning the percentage figure for male sterilization. The Chief of the Executive Board Branch assured the delegation that the correct figure as noted in the corrigendum was 1 per cent and not 10 per cent. The Chief reminded the Board that all UNFPA-assisted country programme activities were undertaken in accordance with the principles and objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action and that was clearly noted in every country programme submitted to the Board for approval.

112. The Executive Board then proceeded to approve, on a no-objection basis, in accordance with decision 97/12, the following country programmes and one extension of an ongoing programme: Botswana (DP/FPA/BWA/3); Cameroon (DP/FPA/CMR/3); Equatorial Guinea (DP/FPA/GNQ/3); Gabon (DP/FPA/GAB/3); Guinea-Bissau (DP/FPA/GNB/3); Lesotho (DP/FPA/LSO/3); Mauritania (DP/FPA/MRT/4); Sao Tome and Principe (DP/FPA/STP/3); Swaziland (DP/FPA/SWZ/3 and Corr.1 (French only)); Jordan (DP/FPA/JOR/5); Yemen (DP/FPA/YEM/2); Bhutan (DP/FPA/BTN/3); Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DP/FPA/PRK/3 and Corr.1); Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/FPA/IRN/2/EXT1); Maldives (DP/FPA/MDV/2); Thailand (DP/FPA/THA/7); and Colombia (DP/FP/COL/3).

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113. The delegations of Botswana, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Yemen took the floor to thank the Executive Board and UNFPA.

114. The Executive Board then took up for consideration the following seven country programmes, which Executive Board members, by prior notice in accordance with decision 97/12, had requested for discussion: Bangladesh (DP/FPA/BGD/5); Papua New Guinea (DP/FPA/PNG/2 and Corr.1 (French only)); South Africa (DP/FPA/ZAF/1); Ethiopia (DP/FPA/ETH/4); Mozambique (DP/FPA/MOZ/5); Niger (DP/FPA/NER/4); and Brazil (DP/FPA/BRA/2).

Assistance to Bangladesh (DP/FPA/BGD/5)

115. Numerous delegations supported the proposed programme and commended its clear and analytical presentation. Executive Board members who had recently been on a field visit to Bangladesh underscored that they had been impressed by UNFPA assistance to Bangladesh, which clearly focused on meeting the goals of ICPD. Several delegations commended the programme for having been formulated in line with the Government's health and population policies and strategies and in complementarity with the programmes of other multi- and bilateral donors. Some delegations inquired about the reform under way in the Ministry of Health and its possible impact on the UNFPA programme. Many delegations noted that more attention should be focused on advocacy, particularly to promote women's empowerment and gender equity. One delegation stated that since UNFPA was a small organization it should focus on advocacy and let the larger donors concentrate on providing assistance for service delivery. Some delegations observed that additional attention should be given to increasing cooperation with other development partners and to promoting South-South cooperation. One delegation inquired about the replicability of the Maternal and Child Welfare Centres (MCWCs) and the criteria for choosing the sites. Another delegation commended the channelling of 10 per cent of programme resources for non-governmental organization (NGO)-executed activities. The delegation welcomed opportunities for South-South cooperation with its neighbour, Bangladesh.

116. One delegation asked for information concerning collaboration with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and also inquired about the impact and sustainability of the Fund's programmes. The delegation emphasized the importance of post-project evaluation and was pleased to note that gender would be a cross-cutting dimension in all UNFPA-supported programmes. The delegation cited the Partners in Population and Development initiative as being a useful mechanism for sharing experience. The delegation also highlighted some lessons learned through its country's cooperation with Bangladesh. Another delegation was pleased to note the reference to the United Nations resident coordinator system and asked what role the United Nations agencies in Bangladesh played in the follow-up to the global conferences. Another delegation, while underscoring the importance of donor collaboration and complementarity in Bangladesh, observed that the in-service training proposed by UNFPA should be linked with the Government's and donors' efforts to improve the quality of reproductive health services. The delegation added that the Fund's communication and advocacy activities should be consistent with and build upon the Government's information, education and communication (IEC) strategy. The

delegation asked that such collaboration be made explicit in the programme document.

117. Another delegation, while endorsing the proposed programme, underscored three points: collaboration and cooperation among all development partners should be given specific attention; the Government's health sector reform efforts should be supported, including the restructuring of the health and family planning wings of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the delivery of the essential package of services; and there should be improvements of the facilities for contraceptive warehousing and distribution. The delegation noted that the Shukhi brand of the oral contraceptive pill was facing some challenges and that the Government would be meeting with the World Health Organization (WHO) to discuss improvements. The delegation asked how the Fund viewed its role in maintaining the Shukhi brand in Bangladesh.

118. One delegation sought clarification on the following points: the benefits of regional cooperation, including that with India and Thailand; the specific role of the UNFPA Country Support Teams (CSTs) in programme implementation; and the reason why the level of funding for the new country programme had not increased. Another delegation asked what was the Fund's specific role and comparative advantage in the context of population assistance to Bangladesh. The delegation added that the document contained no reference to baby-friendly hospitals. The same delegation asked how the constraints cited in paragraph 13 would be overcome and also sought clarification on some of the terms in paragraph 27.

119. The delegation of Bangladesh thanked the Executive Board and UNFPA and highlighted the following features of the country's population programme: the participation and involvement of NGOs and civil society in the population programme; a high level of policy support and commitment on the part of the Government; a rights-based approach to human development, with a focus on women's empowerment and the rights of the child; and the high priority given to safe motherhood, nutrition and education for girls.

120. In his response, the UNFPA Representative in Bangladesh highlighted the Fund's coordination with the World Bank-led donor consortium. The Fund had participated in the pre-appraisal and appraisal missions and key technical areas were covered by the UNFPA CST advisers. The World Bank had praised the Fund for its technical cooperation. He stressed that, in addition, UNFPA collaborated and held regular meetings with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The Fund was also collaborating with the European Union and the Asian Development Bank and was taking the lead in coordinating a local group on gender. With regard to the query on reform, he noted that UNFPA had been advocating for reform in the health sector for a long time. The Fund supported the reform under way in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which would take place in a phased manner. He underscored the importance of ensuring the inclusion of the human dimension in the reform process.

121. The UNFPA Representative noted that the Fund also collaborated with UNAIDS and had chosen to focus on IEC and advocacy for HIV/AIDS prevention. He stated

that South-South cooperation would be further promoted and that Bangladesh had valuable experience to share with other countries, including with regard to NGO partnerships and successes in family planning. With regard to programme monitoring, he noted that there would be regular audits of each project and evaluations. He added that the Fund was endeavouring to incorporate lessons learned into programme and project design. Moreover, the Fund played an important and pioneering role in the delivery of reproductive health services, and the Government relied on it to do so, including through the use of innovative approaches. He noted that UNFPA could become a stronger actor in the area of advocacy. He added that the CST advisers played a key role in providing technical information and guidance on a variety of key subjects, including reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases, migration, ageing and nutrition. He affirmed that the Technical Support Services (TSS)/CST mechanism was a useful one on which the field office relied.

122. On the query regarding the programme's funding level, the Director of the Asia and Pacific Division stated that resource allocation was carried out in accordance with the criteria established and approved by the Executive Board in decision 96/15. With regard to the question on the Shukhi oral contraceptive pills she stated that the discontinuation of those pills would be a matter of concern to UNFPA. Based on independent studies, including a recent WHO study conducted at the request of UNFPA, it had been established that there was no quality issue with the manufacturing process and the delivery of the pills to Bangladesh. However, some problems had been identified with regard to the warehousing and the distribution/logistics system. She noted that two years of concerted effort had preceded the introduction of the Shukhi brand, which was designed for and by Bangladesh. Shukhi was now a well-accepted pill in the country. In order to introduce a new brand, the Government would need to undertake a lengthy process of market research and acceptability trials. She added that UNFPA hoped that the outcome of ongoing discussions on those issues would be in the interest of the Bangladeshi women and the Bangladeshi population programme.

123. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Bangladesh (DP/FPA/BGD/5).

Assistance to Papua New Guinea (DP/FPA/PNG/2 and Corr.1 (French only))

124. One delegation welcomed the second cycle of UNFPA assistance to Papua New Guinea, its closest neighbour. The delegation was pleased to note the close collaboration between the Government of Papua New Guinea, UNFPA and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) in the population and health sector. The same delegation commended UNFPA for its strategy, which focused resources on provinces where no other donors were working, and promoted the goal of national capacity-building. The delegation added that other issues concerning the programme would be taken up bilaterally with the Fund.

125. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Papua New Guinea (DP/FPA/PNG/2 and Corr.1 (French only)).

Assistance to South Africa (DP/FPA/ZAF/1)

126. Several delegations expressed their support for the proposed country programme. One delegation, while observing that the programme was appropriate to the needs of the country, was concerned that UNFPA efforts ran the risk of being spread too thinly and that attempting to accomplish too much could dilute the overall effort, particularly given the programme's modest budget. The delegation noted that more emphasis should be given to working with NGOs, including the Planned Parenthood of South Africa (PPSA). The same delegation added that there was a lack of attention given to HIV/AIDS and in view of the fast-rising rate of the incidence of HIV/AIDS in South Africa, there should be added emphasis on HIV/AIDS and its linkages with population. The delegation observed that the Fund should determine what the relationship of population would be with the new interministerial commission on HIV/AIDS. While noting that in terms of capacity-building the focus of the proposed programme seemed to be on the central National Population Unit (NPU), the delegation noted that the fundamental needs of the provinces and municipalities outweighed those of the central level. The delegation asked UNFPA to clarify whether the provinces would have the means to implement and scale up interventions.

127. Another delegation noted that the role of NGOs should be made more prominent in the proposed programme. The delegation asked why 40 per cent of the country programme resources were expected from multi- and bilateral sources, which were uncertain. Another delegation, while commending the proposed programme for filling a strategic niche, inquired about how UNFPA would mobilize $4 million in multi- and bilateral resources. One delegation fully endorsed the emphasis on national capacity-building, particularly regarding strengthening capacity at the provincial level. The delegation was also pleased to learn that national and local NGOs would be used to deliver reproductive health services. The delegation asked how the needs of the increasing number of immigrants in South Africa were met within the population programme. The same delegation stated that donor coordination did not appear to be functioning well in South Africa and it welcomed the Fund's views on that. Another delegation, noting that it was a neighbour of South Africa, expressed concern about the rising number of cases of HIV/AIDS in both countries, and asked if anything was planned to counter the very serious HIV/AIDS epidemic.

128. The delegation of South Africa thanked the Executive Board and UNFPA and stated that the concerns expressed by the previous speakers were central to the concerns of the Government of South Africa, particularly the concern regarding HIV/AIDS. The delegation observed that on 23 April the South African National Population Policy would be presented to Parliament for ratification. The policy took into consideration the recommendations of the ICPD Programme of Action. The delegation emphasized the need for capacity-building within the National Population Unit and the Population Planning Units in order to implement the population policy.

129. In his response, the UNFPA Representative in South Africa noted that official development assistance represented only about 1 to 2 per cent of total government resources. He stated that the Fund's assistance was catalytic and sought to bring added value to the Government's own efforts in addressing population issues. He added that at the request of the Government, the Fund's

support focused on strengthening the capacity of the National Population Unit. With regard to the queries on multilateral resources, he noted that UNFPA had been working closely with DFID of the United Kingdom, on developing a project for which DFID was expected to provide resources equal to $3.2 million.

130. The UNFPA Representative agreed that HIV/AIDS posed a major threat to the country and noted that while the Fund's resources were limited it fully supported UNAIDS, of which the Fund was a co-sponsor. He added that the Fund was aware of the new commission on HIV/AIDS. He noted that under the UNFPA programme NGOs were expected to develop and pilot innovative approaches that could later be upscaled in the respective provinces. He stated that while UNFPA resources might be limited, the Fund was able to focus on those areas in which the Government had asked for assistance. The Fund was focusing on strengthening the reproductive health project in three provinces with the understanding that those interventions could be upscaled.

131. With regard to the question about the rapid rise of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the Director of the Africa Division noted that that was an important concern for the Fund; indeed, the entire United Nations system was engaged in addressing the HIV/AIDS challenge. She noted the success of Uganda in tackling the HIV/AIDS epidemic and stated that that success was the result of the commitment of the Government at the highest level. She observed that to fight the epidemic both changes in behaviour and commitment at the highest level of Government were essential.

132. The Executive Board approved the country programme for South Africa (DP/FPA/ZAF/1).

Assistance to Ethiopia (DP/FPA/ETH/4)

133. Several delegations supported the proposed country programme for Ethiopia. One delegation commended the continued collaboration between UNFPA and USAID in such areas as contraceptive logistics. The delegation asked for a clarification on the selection of regions where the programme activities would be implemented and noted that it would be useful and synergistic for UNFPA and USAID to determine the activities and target the regions jointly. The delegation stated that it would welcome the Fund's support for an increased role for NGOs and the private sector in the Sector Investment Programme (SIP) as current World Bank programming did not include the development of the private sector in the SIP. Another delegation inquired about complementarity of the programme, particularly with that of the World Bank, and asked how monitoring of programme implementation would be undertaken.

134. Another delegation, while noting that national coverage for reproductive health was very limited and had a low priority, suggested that the baseline for the proposed programme should be the integration of reproductive health into basic health-care services. The delegation added that a great deal needed to be done in the area of advocacy, particularly to deepen the understanding of population issues at various levels. The delegation inquired as to how women's reproductive rights issues would be addressed and what would be the strategy to increase the number of female health workers. The same delegation also asked how population education would be integrated in the curricula of schools in the

regions. The delegation further asked if the programme would be synchronized with that of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Another delegation welcomed any support the Fund could provide to create an enabling environment for involving NGOs and the private sector. The delegation commended the proposed programme for its clear statement of purpose and strategy and encouraged the use of the logical framework technique.

135. In her response, the UNFPA Representative in Ethiopia noted that the Government and the Fund were holding discussions concerning the selection of regions which would be based on population density, rates of fertility, infant and maternal mortality, and the presence of other donors. She stated that UNFPA and USAID were working closely, including in the area of logistics management. She observed that the Government of Ethiopia recognized the important role played by NGOs and the private sector in the population field, but understandably was concerned about the accountability of those organizations. However, the Government had confirmed that the Fund would work with NGOs in the implementation of the country programme. With regard to the Sector Investment Programme, the Fund had provided some CST assistance to the SIP mission and would continue advocacy to ensure the integration of population and reproductive health in the SIP. Meanwhile, the World Bank should also work towards ensuring the same. She noted that UNICEF had not yet synchronized its programme with those of UNDP, UNFPA and the World Food Programme (WFP) but it was currently discussing a bridging programme to enable future synchronization. The UNFPA Representative noted that in the past some regions had been difficult to access and that had inhibited effective monitoring. Under the new programme, a checklist of indicators would be used for monitoring progress in implementation. With regard to reproductive rights, she stated that UNFPA was working with women parliamentarians and women lawyers to promote reproductive rights and to ensure that women knew about their rights. She added that Ethiopia's Constitution was gender-sensitive and protected women. She noted that the Fund would continue to advocate for the education of girls and would encourage the employment of women in the health sector. To that end, the Fund would support training. She added that population and family life education were already integrated in the curricula of some schools and efforts should focus on integrating those topics into school curricula nationwide. Also, attention should be focused on training teachers in that area.

136. With regard to contraceptive supplies, she noted that coverage was very limited and greater efforts, in collaboration with other development partners, were needed to increase coverage. She noted that there was a very successful social marketing programme supported by the German Technical Cooperation Agency (Deutsche Gesellschaft Für Technische Zumsammenarbeit (GTZ)) and USAID. She underscored the need to ensure that all health facilities had a regular, timely and adequate supply of contraceptives.

137. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Ethiopia (DP/FPA/ETH/4).

138. The delegation of Ethiopia took the floor to thank the Executive Board and UNFPA.

Assistance to Mozambique (DP/FPA/MOZ/5)

139. Several delegations expressed their support for the proposed country programme. One delegation was pleased to note the focus on adolescent reproductive health and added that there should also be greater awareness of HIV/AIDS. She noted that the results of the census indicated a lower population figure than expected. Another delegation, which had participated in the Executive Board field visit to Mozambique in 1996, noted that the country faced many challenges: two thirds of its population was under the age of 24; the illiteracy rate was very high; the population of the country was concentrated in two areas, the north and the south, separated by 1,000 kilometres; and there were transportation and communication difficulties. The delegation added that in Zambezia province there were only four doctors serving a population of 3.5 million people. Citing paragraph 28 of the document, the delegation fully agreed that the capacity of the Fund's field office should be strengthened. Another delegation concurred with the previous delegation and acknowledged the close cooperation between the Fund and the Government of Mozambique. It noted the progress made by UNFPA in training and the rehabilitation of health facilities and added that its country was also supporting the training of health-care personnel and the provision of health-care services for adolescents.

140. Another delegation appreciated the well-balanced programme and the focus on adolescent reproductive health. It asked what would be the division of labour between UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF in the area of reproductive health. The delegation asked for information on capacity-building and the strengthening of institutions dealing with population issues at the central level. Another delegation inquired about the 1997 population and housing census and asked about the status of the data analysis. The delegation stressed the importance of having a national population policy. The delegation added that no mention had been made in the document of the large ($27 million) project supported by the European Union. It also wanted to know more about collaboration with UNAIDS. With regard to the need to strengthen office staffing, the delegation suggested that some staff should be placed directly in Zambezia province, where 45 per cent of the Fund's assistance would be focused.

141. The Director, Africa Division, thanked the delegations for their constructive comments and noted that the challenges faced by the country merited the work of the Fund. She acknowledged the transportation difficulties between Maputo and Zambezia. She noted that the Fund planned to recruit and post national professional project personnel in Zambezia to ensure effective programme implementation and utilization of resources. The Director underscored the importance of capacity-building and stated that the Fund would support training towards that end. She noted that adolescent reproductive health was a key area and the Fund would work collaboratively with UNICEF to achieve synergies. She agreed that the analysis of the census data should be completed quickly and that the results should be presented in a manner that would be useful to planners and programme staff. She noted that the Fund would involve the CST advisers to help expedite the process. She observed that the reference to the European Union project had been included in an earlier, longer programme document and had been inadvertently omitted in the shorter document submitted to the Executive Board. She added that the European Union was supporting the UNFPA

programme. The Director acknowledged that HIV/AIDS was a major issue and the Fund was coordinating its activities with the other co-sponsors of UNAIDS.

142. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Mozambique (DP/FPA/MOZ/5).

143. The delegation of Mozambique thanked the Executive Board and UNFPA.

Assistance to Niger (DP/FPA/NER/4)

144. Three delegations commented on the proposed country programme while expressing their support for it. One delegation inquired about the synchronization of programme cycles among the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) since the UNDP programme was ending in 1998. The delegation also stressed the need to change the attitudes of religious leaders on such sensitive issues as population education, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention. There was a need to convince religious leaders about the importance of those issues, and the delegation asked to know more about the Fund's concrete actions in that regard. The delegation added that instead of the term "equity" it wanted the term "equality" to be used with regard to gender. Another delegation emphasized the need for coordination among United Nations and multi- and bilateral agencies in implementing the national population policy. A third delegation noted that the document provided a good analysis of lessons learned and those would provide the Fund with a useful basis for reinforcing its actions in Niger. The delegation wondered if the country had the capacity to absorb the UNFPA assistance being proposed.

145. The Director, Africa Division, informed the Executive Board that the decision to harmonize programme cycles had been taken at the country level by JCGP member agencies. She noted that the UNFPA field office had not been aware of the UNDP decision to end its programme in 1998, since JCGP members had agreed to synchronize their programme cycles. She emphasized the importance of sharing information when unanimous decisions were changed by one party. With regard to the attitudes of religious leaders, she observed that UNFPA had undertaken various activities to involve religious leaders and sensitize them to population issues. The Fund would be organizing a regional conference, scheduled to be held in November 1998, in Niger, on "Islam and Population". That conference would help to promote South-South cooperation and to show that Islam did not place restrictions on family planning. She noted that with regard to the terms "equity" and "equality", the formulation from the Fourth World Conference on Women would be used. The Director affirmed that UNFPA would continue to collaborate and coordinate with other agencies to ensure that its limited funding was put to the best possible use. With regard to the question about absorptive capacity, she noted that where the capacity did not exist, the Fund would need to help build it. A recent study on absorptive capacity in four countries of sub-Saharan Africa had highlighted the need for training to develop capacity for the management of population programmes. She added that the Fund would focus on that issue to enhance effective programme delivery.

146. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Niger (DP/FPA/NER/4).

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Assistance to Brazil (DP/FPA/BRA/2)

147. One delegation, while expressing its support for the proposed programme, noted that it dovetailed appropriately with the USAID strategy and commended UNFPA for working closely with USAID. However, the delegation was concerned that the Fund's approach risked spreading the resources too thinly over a number of issues and possibly diluting their potential impact. Nevertheless, the delegation commended the proposed emphasis on adolescent reproductive health and the integrated approach of combining sex education, adolescent job training, NGO counselling and advocacy. The delegation added that it might be useful to add the elements of outreach to parents and the provision of job and/or credit opportunities for youth in conjunction with training. The same delegation noted that the summary of USAID activities contained in paragraph 15 of the document needed to be updated. While observing that USAID family planning assistance would end in the year 2000, the delegation stated that UNFPA should consider how its capacity-building efforts, described in paragraph 21 of the document, could continue to reinforce USAID contributions. The delegation indicated that USAID HIV/AIDS activities, however, would continue through the year 2003. The delegation noted the insufficiency of assistance to preventive care as a strategy to reduce maternal mortality and pointed out that while sexually transmitted diseases STDs/AIDS prevention was an important measure for improving reproductive health, STDs/AIDS were not a principal cause of maternal mortality. Citing paragraph 12 of the document, the delegation stated that UNFPA and USAID should work together to convince policy makers to include contraceptives as a line item in the budgets of the respective states. The delegation also asked for a clarification on the need for additional studies on contraceptive methods proposed in paragraph 22 of the document, as it had already carried out various such studies.

148. Another delegation was pleased by the clear presentation of the programme and applauded the Fund for its strategy focusing on a few selected states. The delegation asked that the programme document indicate which states had been selected and the resources to be allocated to each. Noting that paragraph 12 of the document referred to the limited implementation capacity of the Ministry of Health, the delegation was concerned that the amount of resources allocated to capacity-building might be insufficient. The delegation asked if there would be coordination with the World Bank's sectoral projects.

149. The Director of the Latin America and Caribbean Division noted that the proposed country programme was highly focused and was based on the lessons learned during the previous cycle of assistance. Reducing maternal mortality and promoting adolescent reproductive health would be the main focus of the programme. Nearly 70 per cent of programme resources would be allocated for reproductive health and 25 per cent would be allocated to population and development activities. She observed that UNFPA would take note of the suggestions made by the delegations. She added that UNFPA was interested in strengthening the logistics management of contraceptive supplies and would be assisting state governments to develop their own programmes. She clarified that the contraceptive studies referred to would only complement those carried out by USAID and the cooperation of USAID would be sought. Regarding assistance to the Ministry of Health, she explained that programme resources would not be sufficient to build all the required capacities, and UNFPA assistance would

focus on supporting changes in norms and legislation in the area of reproductive health, particularly in support of the decentralization process. She added that UNFPA programme activities in the selected states would be carried out in coordination with other agencies working in the same areas, including the World Bank. She also stated that the Fund had been very successful in building alliances with NGOs and 20 per cent of programme resources would be allocated for activities executed by NGOs.

150. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Brazil (DP/FPA/BRA/2).

151. The delegation of Brazil thanked the Executive Board.

152. Following the consideration and approval of the seven country programmes, the President opened the floor for general comments on the UNFPA programming process.

153. One delegation, speaking also on behalf of two other delegations, highlighted SIPs and noted that the sector-wide approach and the pooling of resources represented the programming model of the future, but added that it might prove difficult for UNFPA to pool its resources with those of other donors. The delegation suggested that the Executive Board should have a substantive discussion on the subject at the annual session, based on a conference room paper. Another delegation supported that proposal and noted that its country was also very interested in the Fund's sectoral activities. Another delegation welcomed the Board's new process of having a focused discussion on selected country programmes. It underscored the need to further link lessons learned from earlier cycles of assistance to current country programmes and noted the lack of analysis on the Fund's relationship to the programmes of other donors. The delegation cautioned against developing parallel reproductive health programmes for youth outside the mainstream reproductive health programmes.

154. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) thanked the delegations for their useful comments and noted that the Fund had discussed the sector approach and would welcome the Executive Board's guidance on that matter. She was concerned that reproductive health tended to be neglected in the health sector. She observed that at present the Fund's financial regulations did not allow the pooling of resources and added that there was insufficient time to prepare a conference room paper for the annual session. She stated that the requested corrigenda would be issued and noted that the Fund would endeavour to better spell out the lessons learned and the relationship between the old and new programmes. Similarly, within the limitations of space, the Fund would also endeavour to delineate the relationship of its programmes to those of other donors, when those relationships were particularly close. She agreed that parallel programmes for youth might not be useful; however, many countries were not prepared to set up integrated programmes for youth. She concluded by thanking the Executive Board members for their advice and guidance.

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Joint segment

V. UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS AND UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

155. In accordance with written requests by the required number of delegations, the Executive Board held joint discussions on the UNDP country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) and the UNFPA country programmes for Bolivia, Rwanda, and Mali.

A. Bolivia

First country cooperation framework for Bolivia (DP/CCF/BOL/1)

156. The Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, introduced the first CCF for Bolivia (DP/CCF/BOL/1). He highlighted the salient points in the CCF, including the fact that in spite of a prolonged period of stable economic growth, approximately 70 per cent of the national population lived in extreme poverty; those most affected were indigenous people and women. A new Government had been democratically elected and installed in August 1997. The CCF had been developed through a national dialogue, which had identified the country's priorities. Major institutional reforms had been undertaken over the last several years and needed to be put into operation in the areas of decentralization and public sector reform. There were widespread problems in the delivery of programmes as well as in international cooperation, which played a major role in the development efforts of the country. Moreover, Bolivia was one of the largest producers of coca leaves and the second largest producer of refined cocaine - that issue was being profiled by the Government as one of the major problems to be attacked in the period covered by the CCF.

157. The fifth country programme had been thoroughly evaluated and Bolivia had been one of the first countries to use the programme approach as a way to improve the coordination of development programmes. Efforts in that area had been positive but such a process took time and required increased cooperation among development partners and the Government - issues that were being addressed and should further consolidate the use of the programme approach in the future. With regard to United Nations system coordination, UNDP had also been working extensively in the area of common services. Bolivia was probably one of the countries in Latin America that was most advanced in coordinating United Nations services and their administration with positive results. In addition, UNDP had worked with UNFPA and would continue to do so on issues relating to delivery problems in the country, particularly the bottlenecks in the use of the national execution modality. UNDP was also working with UNFPA and other partners in the area of social statistical indicators and discussing possible involvement in the upcoming national census.

158. Stressing the need for cooperation and coordination with other donors, one delegation stated that the CCF reflected the priorities of the Government of Bolivia and fitted in well with the delegation's bilateral assistance programme in the country. Another delegation regarded the CCF as well coordinated and

elaborated, especially in terms of the lessons learned from past experience and how they would affect future programmes. The same delegation asked for clarification on the ratio of core resources to be used for the three thematic areas of focus - opportunity, equity and institutionality. The delegation also pointed out that there were many good examples of South-South collaboration in the Latin America region and inquired whether it would be used as a modality in implementing the programmes and projects in the CCF. In the area of micro-finance, UNDP proposed to promote an increase in domestic savings and engage in other private sector activities, such as the promotion of micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises. But at the same time, it was mentioned that UNDP was not a provider of capital and thus would participate in the area of access to technology and capacity-building. If UNDP did not have any capital for micro-credit or micro-finance activities, how would that gap be filled? The delegation viewed the stress on the improvement of monitoring of impact and performance indicators in the CCF as quite important, especially in terms of joint programming with the other United Nations agencies, and asked whether there were any plans or programmes to further develop joint monitoring or evaluation.

159. One delegation noted that the funding table in the CCF stated that the target contribution of the Government of Bolivia was $86 million, approximately two thirds of the total resources required for the period of the CCF. The delegation inquired about the source of those funds - would they come from bilateral or multilateral aid to the Government? The delegation also asked for general information on the origin of government contributions to other programmes.

160. Another delegation inquired how stakeholders would be involved in the design of environmental and sustainable livelihood activities and in the work of micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises. Would participatory methods be used to identify the population's perceived needs and would they be incorporated into the design process? The delegation also observed that the CCF made reference to the establishment of environmentally protected areas. Since Bolivia already had a well-established system of protected areas consisting of 11 national parks plus some biosphere reserves, the delegation asked for clarification on the role of UNDP in the area.

161. One delegation observed there was a difference in the figures for the total population of Bolivia - 6.5 million in the UNDP document and 7.4 million in the UNFPA document. The speaker went on to say that his delegation appreciated the remarks made by the Deputy Assistant Administrator about the programme approach and the extensive information in the CCF about the efforts made in that direction. Major changes were noted in narrowing the focus in the CCF. However, the delegation asked for clarification about UNDP support for rural textile production. Also, as pointed out by another delegation, UNDP proposed to provide small- and medium-scale enterprises with information, training and access to technology but would not be providing capital. In the delegation's view, there was a risk that the role of UNDP would be marginal and that it would be absorbed by efforts to coordinate with larger and more important donors in the area. The CCF also mentioned the implementation of education reforms and health policies. Again, the delegation wondered whether that was an appropriate area of focus for UNDP. However, it was noted that the proposal for a national

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governance programme and for support for judicial reform were two areas where UNDP had a distinct role and comparative advantage. On the question of United Nations coordination, while the delegation appreciated the information provided in the oral introduction of the CCF at the current session about United Nations agency cooperation in terms of United Nations common services, it was information that could also have been incorporated into the CCF document, together with information about what other donors were doing in the country.

162. Another delegation noted a lack of strategic focus in the document. The role of UNDP was defined as a provider of development services that would help the country to reach a higher level of human development, a very general description. The delegation would have liked to have seen a short analysis on the comparative advantages of UNDP in Bolivia. In addition it was unsatisfactory that the issue of coordination was not elaborated on at all in the document.

163. The Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, thanked delegations for their comments, questions and support. Addressing one delegation's query, he noted 60 per cent of core resources would be used for the thematic area of equity (poverty eradication); 40 per cent would be used for institutional reform; and the area of opportunity (environment and sustainable livelihoods would be financed primarily out of non-core funds, primarily from the Global Environment Facility (GEF)). It was expected that approximately two thirds of cost-sharing resources for the period covered by the CCF would come from the Government, either from multilateral loan proceeds or from other third-party donors since there was a tradition in Bolivia of fruitful collaboration with third-party donors in the country. Building on the experience of the previous country programme with the programme approach, core resources had been used predominantly as seed money and to assist the Government in rapidly establishing a platform around which programmes could be built. Thus, core resources had the strategic value of leading to rapid deployment and, in most cases, to the formulation or early implementation of programmes that would later receive resources from the Government itself and/or from other multilateral and bilateral donors. With regard to South-South cooperation, in many ways and particularly in terms of issues relating to modalities and the programme approach, Bolivia had been a pilot country and had attempted to convey not only the concept but all of the experiences of pilot programmes to other countries within the region and in other regions as well. For four years, Bolivia had been one of the centres of experimentation for UNDP, precisely because of its use of innovative programming modalities. Also, Bolivia was one of the countries chosen to attend the workshop on programme impact indicators mentioned previously by the Administrator because of the experience gained over the years in developing indicators to measure the impact of development programmes and projects - not only the outcome of the programmes and projects, but the actual societal impact.

164. Another issue raised by some delegations was the UNDP contribution to micro-finance projects, when the organization did not expect to be directly involved with the resources that would be required to carry out the projects. UNDP had experience in the area through the MicroStart initiative, and, more specifically, UNDP was building on already existing experience in Bolivia with the social emergency and social development funds, as well as with the Banco

Sol. The role of the organization was more a matter of building on experiences in which local financing was potentially available. UNDP would see how it could collaborate with the Government on moving the area of micro-financing towards the productive sector and not just social investment projects. In that respect, UNDP believed it could provide some technical cooperation whereas others would be called upon to provide financing.

165. To address the comment on the discrepancy between the population listed in the UNDP and UNFPA documents while it was possible that the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF) might resolve the problem, the census definitely would. All development partners should support the census activities in the country so that there would be a good statistical baseline not only for the number of people living there but also what they did for a living and in what socio-economic condition they lived.

166. The issue of governance was also raised by one delegation. The Deputy Assistant Administrator noted that it was a key area in Bolivia for several reasons; for example, support for the sustainability of the ongoing decentralization process and support for the Government's very strong drive towards transparency and clearer rules for public sector activities such as procurement, in which UNDP was involved, and support for initiatives in the area of justice, such as the recent creation of a specific ministry to address issues of justice and the installation of an ombudsman. These were areas in which UNDP had collaborated with the Government and would continue to do so.

167. On the question of the textile project, that was actually an ongoing activity in the area of regional rural development schemes and resulted from early discussions on the programme approach in the fifth cycle. UNDP was happy with the results of its collaboration with the Government of the Netherlands on the project. On the issue of the involvement of stakeholders, the Popular Participation Law had created strong local mechanisms for the active involvement of stakeholders - regional and municipal. In addition, the procedures for GEF programme formulation sought to ensure that active participation of the concerned stakeholders would take place.

168. On the question of focus, in both the national programme and the UNDP programme, it was clearly stated that the focus was on poverty reduction. As the area was a national priority, UNDP was dedicating the principal amount of its resources and time to providing development services in that area. On United Nations coordination, which could play a major role in the development of the country, the United Nations system had made a great deal of progress in the area of common premises and was currently awaiting a decision on the establishment of a United Nations house.

169. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Bolivia (DP/CCF/BOL/1).

UNFPA assistance to Bolivia (DP/FPA/BOL/2)

170. Several delegations noted their support for the proposed country programme for Bolivia. One delegation stressed the need for cooperation and collaboration with other donors and noted that many of the programme's key activities

complemented those of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The delegation highlighted the Fund's comparative advantage in the areas of women's empowerment and gender issues but was concerned that the Fund's support for the distribution of free contraceptives within public sector services had mixed benefits and might work against future sustainability. The delegation noted that UNFPA should emphasize the importance of improving the relationship between health-care providers and indigenous clients. It was also necessary to try to address certain sociocultural attitudes such as the view that since pregnancy was not an illness, no health care was required during pregnancy. Given that family planning was still a very political and sensitive issue in the country, another delegation wondered why only limited resources were being allocated for advocacy. Another delegation welcomed the Fund's focus on male involvement and noted that it was essential for women's empowerment. It noted that the maternal mortality rate was high considering the country's gross national product and said that it would have liked more information on that issue. The delegation asked if sufficient resources were being allocated for advocacy. One delegation was pleased with the Fund's emphasis on tackling the problem of maternal mortality.

171. In her response, the UNFPA Representative for Bolivia thanked the members of the Executive Board for their support and concurred that the Fund worked very closely with USAID in a number of areas. With regard to the issue of sustainability for contraceptives, she noted that the gradual absorption of contraceptive costs by the Government had been included in the proposal currently under review for the transformation of the maternal and child insurance scheme into a basic insurance package that would include, inter alia, family services for men and women throughout the life cycle. Also, the sustainability of the insurance package, which would strengthen its institutionalization process, was being ensured through the commitment of the municipalities to support the package. So far, 120 of the 311 municipalities had pledged their support to the new package. Regarding indigenous issues, she stated that the emphasis on sociocultural and interpersonal aspects in the training of service providers supported by the programme was the crux of the Fund's contribution to the improvement of quality. The Fund emphasized the importance of those aspects in enhancing the relationship between health-care providers and clients. The programme's information, education and communication (IEC) strategy, which had a strong rural component, would also address those issues. She observed that since ICPD, official counterparts in Bolivia had shown increasing commitment regarding population issues and the new Government was supportive of reproductive health programmes. Also, a healthy dialogue on the subject prevailed with the Catholic Church. While noting that the current level of advocacy was appropriate, she agreed that it could be enhanced. She added that all programme activities emphasized gender, sociocultural and ethnic aspects and attention would continue to be focused on increasing male involvement.

172. The Executive Board adopted the country programme for Bolivia (DP/FPA/BOL/2).

173. The delegation of Bolivia took the floor to thank the Executive Board.

174. The delegation of Bolivia thanked the Executive Board for having adopted both programmes. Emerging problems relating to poverty in Bolivia had given rise to the negative statistics on coca-leaf production and participation in the production of refined cocaine, and the Government was undertaking an intense struggle against the scourge of drugs. In Bolivia, the national dialogue - a unique programme in the delegation's part of the world - had made it possible to deepen the process of democratization. The national dialogue proceeded through a process of popular participation that took democracy to isolated communities far from population centres. Democratization also brought about investment in housing, infrastructure, and health, which were regulated, supervised and implemented by the people themselves. UNDP and UNFPA had accompanied the country in the above-mentioned processes, and the delegation wished to express its appreciation for the work carried out by the two agencies - efforts to integrate, understand, and coordinate that had transformed those programmes into a solution providing continuity in the country - continuity that had not prevailed in the past, as a result of political changes or natural disasters.

B. Rwanda

First country cooperation framework for Rwanda (DP/CCF/RWA/1)

175. The Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, introduced the first CCF for Rwanda. He noted that the previous country programme had been extended by one year to allow Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) partners to synchronize their programmes during 1998. Although the effects of the genocide of 1994 were devastating, significant progress had been made. Nevertheless, structural constraints to economic and social development persisted. Among the major challenges faced by the country were the urgent need for national reconciliation and reintegration, limited economic opportunities, agriculture and weak national management capacity. The removal of a culture of impunity and promotion of respect for human rights were also essential. UNDP had been successful in mobilizing resources for Rwanda through the round-table process. In addition, a special UNDP fund for Rwanda had been established. However, in order to utilize these resources effectively, UNDP could not rely on the national execution modality, because the State apparatus and civil society were both severely affected by the war. On an exceptional basis, however, a direct execution modality was approved by the Executive Board for Rwanda. In terms of delivery, as a result of direct execution, 94 per cent of total resources administered by UNDP during 1997 were delivered.

176. The UNDP Resident Representative and Resident Coordinator observed that the CCF allowed UNDP to establish a framework of cooperation with the Government of Rwanda and to move away from the emergency relief operation that had characterized interventions during the last three years. The focus areas of the CCF addressed the country's main development challenges. The strategy adopted would aim at shifting from an emergency relief to facilitating a gradual return to normalization of the country's political, economic and social situation. Activities would focus on ensuring a continuum between short- and mid-term reintegration needs of returnees and their long-term social and economic needs, to ensure their sustained integration back into society. Equally, needs of

internally affected populations, survivors of genocide, and other vulnerable groups would be addressed.

177. The UNDP Resident Representative then highlighted the main points of the CCF. He went on to note that in March 1998, one of the first international meetings on the promotion of micro-financing and micro-enterprises was held in Rwanda, attended by over 50 countries from Africa and Asia, mainly to define the areas of priority within a framework that had been elaborated by a group of experts within the region, in particular the Africa region as a whole. A joint unit had been set up with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to address the needs of returnees and to provide support for groups to contribute to the national reconciliation process promoted by the Government. The unit was preparing area development programmes in three prefectures and would continue its work in the rest of the country as programmes were implemented. A joint programme would be presented to donors within the next two or three months.

178. Cooperation with other United Nations agencies, NGOs and the donor community in carrying out programmes was viewed as essential. Nine thematic groups had been set up, headed by specialized or other agencies. Along with donors, NGOs and the Government, the thematic groups had been working to ensure coherence in programmes and to identify gaps and prepare for the thematic consultations that would take place in the coming months. In addition, although common premises had not yet been addressed, in terms of common services, a United Nations workshop and garage had been set up, and work had been done on unifying administrative procedures and services as well as travel. In addition, a common United Nations information management unit had been established in the Office of the Resident Coordinator, with the aim of providing baseline data for all agencies. Cooperation with representatives of the donor community, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund was also stressed.

179. One delegation stated that, generally speaking, it agreed with the analysis of the situation in the CCF, especially with regard to progress achieved since 1994. The delegation was happy to note that the situation analysis and framework were established with the Government of Rwanda and approved of the list of priorities elaborated. The speaker hoped that implementation of the programme would contribute to a constructive dialogue between the Government of Rwanda and the United Nations. Regarding the legal apparatus, there were certain needs that had to be addressed immediately and the system needed to be strengthened so that the problems could be solved. To address reconciliation, many judicial and extra-judicial measures were worthy of attention. In addition, the delegation hoped that specific attention would be devoted to the special considerations of the state of development of Rwanda, as described in the CCF, as well as to the socio-economic consequences of AIDS, the general situation and status of women, and the state of the environment. Full cooperation and coordination with other agencies, including the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), was essential. The delegation also inquired about what was being done to combat erosion, since one of the objectives in the CCF was the establishment of food security.

180. Another delegation stated that the CCF clearly indicated the intention of UNDP to support the development policies and efforts of the Government of

Rwanda. The delegation believed it was important that United Nations activities in the country mesh as fully as possible with the plans and priorities of the Government. They particularly supported the emphasis on reviving Rwanda's rural economy. Immediate attention should be given to improving agricultural production and the institutions that supported it. The delegation understood the need for direct execution of some projects. Activities, however, should be consistent with the guidelines laid down by the Executive Board in its decision 98/2 of 23 January 1998. The delegation's field office had observed that a major problem in sustaining government capacity in Rwanda was that the Government could not pay salaries comparable to those offered by NGOs or the United Nations and inquired whether UNDP had any ideas on how best to address that situation. The delegation was glad to find that the UNDP/UNHCR joint programming unit was finally functioning. While acknowledging the difficulties in putting the unit together, the delegation wished the process had not taken so long. With greater cooperation between UNDP and UNHCR and clearer policy guidance from the authorities in Rwanda, the unit would operate more smoothly in the future. The delegation's understanding, however, was that UNDP and UNHCR still had not engaged in real joint projects and programmes that fully bridged the transition from relief to development. The speaker was glad to hear at the current session that joint programming would take place shortly. While the delegation agreed that UNDP should join in the effort to combat HIV/AIDS, it wondered whether more attention might be given to other diseases, notably malaria, for which the means of prevention and treatment were well known. The delegation also stressed the importance of incorporating elements supporting the advancement of women under the CCF.

181. One delegation agreed that Rwanda continued to face the short-term challenges of reintegration and reconstruction as well as the longer-term demands for economic and social development. Therefore, the delegation supported the emphasis of the UNDP framework or capacity-building and the reintegration of refugees and displaced persons. It also supported the UNDP focus on the significant burden placed on women-heads-of-households and was pleased to see that particular attention was given to women as one of the most vulnerable groups. The focus in the CCF on making basic education available to all was viewed favourably, as was the focus on the strengthening and rehabilitation of the judicial system. Ending the culture of impunity that allowed killing and other human rights abuses to continue and which inhibited further economic progress in the country was viewed as imperative. Donor coordination must remain a priority if development assistance was to have maximum impact. At a broad level, the round-table process was useful, but greater emphasis should be put on the importance of thematic consultations for sectoral programmes. The delegation stood ready to participate in those consultations and welcomed the updates provided about their timetables. They viewed UNDP support to the Government's demobilization programme as an essential way to assist in the development of the country while at the same time reducing the Government's expenditure on its armed forces. The delegation's Government had recently provided funds towards the programme and urged other donors to do so as well. The delegation inquired whether the measures for the alleviation of poverty aimed at food security, diversification of rural economic activity, improving agricultural production, urban and rural job creation, etc., would all be designed with the inclusion of a social impact assessment as a means of ensuring that there was full understanding of how the beneficiaries would be

affected, and participatory approaches would be used to identify needs and in programme design.

182. Another delegation stated that its Government's involvement in development cooperation in Rwanda was long-standing. It had been interrupted by the genocide of 1994, but was now progressively regaining its momentum. The delegation welcomed the joint discussion of the UNDP and UNFPA programmes, which had been made possible through harmonization of the UNDP, UNFPA and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) programming cycles in Rwanda. The delegation was convinced that such a joint undertaking was of particular relevance in Rwanda, as it allowed for a more comprehensive and global approach to the difficult transition from emergency to rehabilitation and long-term development. The current transition required improved coordination between the Government and all of the agencies and donors involved, not only in terms of development cooperation but also in the area of emergency assistance, with a view to ensuring that short-term interventions did not compromise but rather prepared for long-term development. The delegation was pleased that the CCF focused on enhanced coordination in programming and was interested to learn more about the overall strategic framework mentioned in the document. What was its relation with coordination with United Nations specialized agencies and joint United Nations system programming? A substantial part of the delegation's Government's bilateral development assistance for Rwanda was currently being channelled through the United Nations development system. As a contributor to the Government of Rwanda's demobilization programme, the delegation requested information about the impact of that programme thus far. How many soldiers had been demobilized? Were there any lessons to be learned from similar programmes in other countries such as Mozambique? In addition, the delegation indicated that it would welcome close involvement in the monitoring of the demobilization programme and would like to receive a regular report containing the relevant statistics. The CCF provided an interesting example of a combination of core and non-core resources, the latter accounting for two thirds of the overall programme. What were the respective experiences to date, in particular with the UNDP Trust Fund for Rwanda? Were there any general lessons to be learned? One of the cross-cutting issues in the UNDP CCF and the UNFPA country programme was the combating of HIV/AIDS. Whereas UNFPA was concentrating on adolescent health, UNDP was targeting the socio-economic impact of the epidemic. The delegation asked how those two particular areas of focus were integrated into the national multi-donor-funded AIDS programme and if broad coverage of the various necessary elements to fight the epidemic had been ensured.

183. One delegation, speaking on behalf of another delegation, stated that there was a lack of information in the CCF about coordination arrangements in Rwanda, notably with Bretton Woods institutions. The delegation appreciated the information provided about the thematic groups but believed more information about coordination within the United Nations system and with other donors could have been contained in the CCF. The delegation noted the comments in the CCF about the relationship between the round-table process and the Consolidated Appeal Process and the recognition of the need to define the relationship further; the delegation fully agreed and asked for any comments UNDP might have on how this could be achieved. In addition, it was well known that the situation in Rwanda was very much dependent on the regional situation. There was not much information in the CCF on the subject. Also, in terms of areas of

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focus in the CCF, the delegation was not convinced that training was a pressing issue. Agricultural extension and modernization also might not fall within the comparative advantages of UNDP; a more comprehensive reference to the respective roles of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNDP in the area would have been appreciated. The delegation was also not sure that access to credit was an appropriate area of focus for UNDP. As other delegations had stated, the urgent needs were for national reconciliation, ending the culture of impunity, and promoting ethnic reconciliation, so greater stress on those issues would have been preferable.

184. One delegation wished to acknowledge the work of the UNDP Resident Representative in Rwanda. Supporting the Government in reconstructing administrative and management capacity would be essential in the move to sustainable development. Rehabilitation and strengthening of the justice system were also key factors of long-term peace and reconciliation. The focus on women, including the widows of genocide, was to be commended. The delegation's Government was assisting the Government of Rwanda and UNDP in all of the above-mentioned areas. The food security sector was also of vital importance. In the short term, there might well be a severe difficulty in Rwanda, with FAO indicating a food deficit of 17,000 million tons. The resources required to implement the programmes under the CCF were considerable. Could UNDP provide specific information as to the precise timing and location of the next round table for Rwanda?

185. One delegation noted that the analysis of the situation in the country appeared to be correct in the CCF but perhaps too optimistic with regard to Rwanda's development prospects. Rwanda was a country with needs that greatly exceeded the resources that would be available, as was also the case for UNDP. It was necessary to establish clear priorities. Among the range of suggested activities in the framework, the delegation saw a particular slot for UNDP in the three following areas - capacity-building in planning and management for development, support for decentralization in administration, and strengthening of the judiciary system. Coordination of assistance continued to be a problem in Rwanda, one in which all of the players, whether bilateral or multilateral, had their share of responsibility. The delegation was encouraged by the information provided about the efforts under way within the United Nations system. The CCF document, however, mentioned only a few activities with UNHCR, FAO and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The delegation was glad to note that cooperation appeared to be expanding. The situation of women should be a central element of all UNDP activities in the country and specific measures should be taken to ensure that there was follow-up and that the assessments and the reviews took into consideration this central aspect.

186. Another delegation was pleased that the UNDP programme was well aligned with the priorities of the Government of Rwanda. The priority placed on good governance and capacity-building, including of the judicial system, and the demobilization of soldiers, corresponded to the areas of development cooperation with Rwanda of the Government of the delegation. They were also the basis for the reintegration and rehabilitation of returned refugees and vulnerable groups. The delegation commended the increased emphasis on the inclusion of women in development in Rwanda. Given the difficult context of coordination of the

development efforts in the country, the delegation stressed the coordinating role of UNDP in the country.

187. One delegation stated that it believed that the stage of emergency relief might be over and that efforts should be directed towards sustainable development. The delegation supported the description of the present situation in Rwanda, shared the analysis of the fundamental problems in the country, and supported the proposed strategy of the CCF. Economic recovery, the revitalization of the rural economy and economic growth were imperative for social reconciliation. The delegation believed that the prevention and cure of the post-traumatic stress syndrome of victims of the genocide should also receive special consideration. The rehabilitation and strengthening of the justice system was viewed as a key factor in the rehabilitation of the rural economy. The delegation considered it to be important that UNDP had acknowledged the need to improve coordination within the United Nations system and with donors and Governments. Only then would UNDP interventions be efficient and effective. The thematic consultations were welcomed along with the efforts to develop a strategic framework. With regard to the experimental character of such thematic frameworks, and keeping in mind the humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council, could UNDP provide information on lessons learned so far? The creation of the joint UNDP/UNHCR reintegration programming unit fitted in well within the concept. The unit should assist the parties involved to work effectively towards more structural rather than emergency assistance. In addition, the delegation inquired how UNDP evaluated cooperation with the World Bank.

188. Another delegation noted that since Rwanda was at the stage of rehabilitation and reconciliation, the role and comparative advantage of UNDP was to keep the continuum between short- and long-term needs and to provide support in the area of governance and the coordination of assistance. Regarding the coordination of the mobilization of assistance, not only from the bilateral and multilateral donors but especially from the Bretton Woods institutions, the speaker had just attended a World Bank seminar on the eve of Africa in the twenty-first century. The World Bank had made positive remarks about participating in the round-table mechanism in Rwanda. The CCF did not provide precise information about that subject. Would UNDP elaborate its views on collaboration with Bretton Woods institutions? With regard to the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa (UNSIA), the Administrator had already mentioned at the current session that after a mission to the Great Lakes region, he would like to extend the Special Initiative. How would UNSIA apply to countries in special situations, especially Rwanda?

189. One delegation noted the considerable efforts of UNDP in stabilizing the situation in Rwanda after the genocide. Because of the crisis situation, some UNDP programmes were not being executed through national institutions and the UNDP country office was commended for its effective implementation role. The delegation endorsed the strategy and thematic areas of the CCF, especially strengthening capacity in the areas of security and the judicial system and support for demobilization of ex-combatants. The strategy and thematic areas fell within the priorities of the Government of Rwanda. Vocational training to ensure sustainable livelihoods for demobilized soldiers would certainly create an enabling environment for increased security. In view of the complexity of

the situation in Rwanda, the delegation hoped that additional efforts would be made by all United Nations agencies operating in the country to strengthen coordination and the optimal use of resources.

190. Another delegation took note with satisfaction of progress made since 1994 and the firm intention of UNDP to do everything possible to facilitate the transition from an emergency situation to a progressive return to normalcy. That process would require the building and strengthening of national capacities as well as increased cooperation and coordination of all the players present in the field at all levels. The delegation hoped that UNDP would continue to play an effective role in that area. In addition, the involvement of NGOs at all stages of the implementation of programmes was viewed as not only desirable but essential. Regarding modalities for programme execution, in the case of direct execution, in which sectors would this modality be applied? In the case of the development of human resources, an essential part of the programme, how did UNDP envisage filling the gap in Rwanda and with what agencies did it intend to cooperate? In the area of food security, the delegation shared the same doubts of another delegation with regard to the specific competence of UNDP in the area. Other organizations such as FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development were better equipped to work in the area. The delegation was more interested in significant progress being made in the areas of justice and security and programmes for demobilization and administrative decentralization.

191. The delegation of the Government of Rwanda expressed appreciation for the statement made earlier by the Administrator and the information provided by the Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, and the Resident Coordinator in Rwanda. There was a growing partnership between the Government of Rwanda and UNDP in addressing some of the problems the country faced - a partnership that found expression in the CCF, the first CCF for Rwanda. The delegation of Rwanda agreed with the situation analysis in the document, which reaffirmed the need for substantial resources at a level commensurate with the magnitude of the programmes identified in the report. The delegation was encouraged to note that the national capacities would be used increasingly wherever they were available, which would promote ownership of the programme and increase the capacity of Rwandans eventually to manage UNDP-funded programmes. The delegation stressed the need for capacity-building through increased training of Rwandans in the areas identified in the CCF. While direct execution of certain aspects of the programme would take place, the delegation hoped that the Executive Board would view it as an experiment and not as the final programme execution modality. Meanwhile, the Government of Rwanda would accept the proposal for direct execution and examine its effectiveness and impact over time.

192. The UNDP Resident Representative responded to the comments and questions of delegations. He noted that one speaker had said that UNDP might have been too optimistic about the interventions proposed in the CCF. What had been achieved in Rwanda in the last three years with the support of the international community and the Government had been remarkable and should be viewed as a solid building block towards good governance and the consolidation of achievements in other areas. There were several questions related to the justice sector. The rehabilitation of the justice system and security was unique in developing

countries. Considering the magnitude of the problem, the process of reconciliation might take many generations. But a positive element had been put into place - a fairer and more accountable judicial system. UNDP had collaborated in the support of training of the judiciary, the setting-up of the Ministry of Justice, including its infrastructure, the passing of legislation on genocide, and the passing of legislation on women's rights to property - all positive elements towards a better, just society. Much remained to be done, but what had been accomplished thus far was a good indication of the progress that might be made in the future. There was a strong commitment on the part of the Government and UNDP had been working very closely with an appointed parliament, which had proven in many instances to be an independent legislative body.

193. Some delegations had stated that technical and other education were not priorities. But the educational needs of the country were enormous. Over 200,000 primary and middle schoolchildren had returned to Rwanda in the last year and a half and no space existed for them in the country's school system, not to mention the linguistic problems associated with returnees. Also, there was only one university in the country. The lack of space for over 200,000 students might even exacerbate the challenges of reconciliation. UNDP had examined the education sector thoroughly through consultation with donors, the Government, and civil society. Because of the number of unskilled, untrained people in the country, education could do a great deal to help to give people a chance to move and find better jobs and other opportunities. UNDP had invested in setting up the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology and the other technical centres, middle schools and institutes of higher education in the country. In addition, UNDP had been attracting trained Rwandese from abroad to return through either the UNDP programme or bilateral or multilateral programmes, and was in the process of working out a Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) programme to bring skilled Rwandese from abroad into the country. UNDP had also benefited from the work of a large number of United Nations Volunteers.

194. In the new programme for consolidation of the reintegration programme, UNDP was aligning NGOs and other civil society groups within the framework of the prefectures or local government authorities so as to increase government capacity rather than create parallel programmes. UNDP had also completed a number of short-term training programmes, including in the justice sector and other security areas, in order to enhance national capacity. Human resources development continued to be an important element, not only for economic development but also for reconciliation and reintegration. Almost half of Rwanda's current population had come from different countries with different backgrounds; most had been in the diaspora for more than 30 years. There were people who could only communicate in their local languages, people who spoke French, people who spoke English, people with whom UNDP could only communicate with an interpreter.

195. On UNAIDS, there was a thematic group in the country headed by both the World Health Organization and UNFPA, which included an expert from UNAIDS supported by the Office of the Resident Coordinator, the Ministry of Health, and local and international NGOs and bilateral donors present in the country. The thematic group did not only meet to exchange information but was intensively involved in implementing programmes, together with the Ministry of Health and

local governments. Recently, malaria had become a problem in the country. The same task force had been working to combat the disease and some generous support had been received in-country. UNDP was appealing to the international community for very limited resources for a short time to address the national epidemic.

196. On the strategic framework and the shift from relief to development, the Resident Coordinator stated that at the point when refugees had begun to return to the country one and a half years previously, UNDP had begun to reflect on the subject, even before the guidelines on strategic frameworks had been received. UNDP took the lead in initiating a joint mission with the World Bank to look at the impact of humanitarian assistance on the return of refugees and the ability of the economy and society to absorb them. In December 1996, a report was produced, which had been used as a basis for planning and consultations. The mission had looked not only at the absorptive capacity of the society and economy, but also at the impact the return of the refugees would have on the macroeconomic framework of the country. In cooperation with the Government, JCGP partners were then able to refine their roles in the country. United Nations agencies, Bretton Woods institutions and NGOs had set up thematic groups around the most critical areas, ranging from sectoral issues to defining policies to eventually setting up a joint committee made up of NGOs, the Government, and United Nations agencies, for which there was a full-time consultant from the Oxford Famine Relief Campaign (OXFAM). A national workshop on the strategic framework was planned for the middle or end of May 1998. However, this would not be an exercise parallel to the thematic consultations. Most of the documentation for the thematic consultations was ready and would be forwarded to the concerned parties shortly. The dates of the thematic consultations would be from May/June to September; details would be provided soon. It was hoped that the third round-table meeting would take place before the end of the year, following the thematic consultations, and when the international community would be in a position to review the results of actions taken over the year as well as the achievements of the second round-table meeting.

197. Regarding cooperation with Bretton Woods institutions, he noted that representatives of the institutions had not attended the aid coordination mechanism of thematic group meetings regularly. Their support and participation had been sought, but the relationship between United Nations organizations in the field and Bretton Woods institutions needed to be more clearly defined, especially in countries coming out of crisis.

198. In terms of needs assessments, UNDP, UNHCR, WFP and the Government were implementing area development programmes in a participatory manner, working in the communes at the sectoral level as well as at the village level to define the priorities of beneficiaries. On a wider scope, the process would also be the basic methodology for the consolidation of the reintegration programme. The Resident Coordinator also noted that the joint programming unit did not just include UNDP and UNHCR, but WFP as well. The unit was also discussing with UNICEF the possibility of membership in the unit. Eventually, the unit would become a United Nations planning unit, tapping local or headquarters resources and technical expertise from United Nations specialized agencies. To come back to the round-table process, the Resident Coordinator agreed that there was a need to define the Consolidated Appeal Process, the round-table mechanism, and

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even the relationship between the round-table mechanism and the Consultative Group. Was Rwanda still considered to be a country in emergency and in need of consolidated appeals? And what were the constraints of that process?

199. Regarding direct execution, the Resident Coordinator wished to reassure the Executive Board, and particularly the representative of the Government of Rwanda, that the modality did not mean that UNDP would be doing the work itself - direct execution would be used as a management tool for the country office to choose from a wide range of implementing partners, in accordance with the capacity and the potential they offered. UNDP had not implemented any programmes in the country, but had been able to tap the resources available in the country or internationally; by June 1998, UNDP would reach 100 per cent in the implementation of all of its programmes funded by core or trust fund resources.

200. The Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, thanked delegations for their constructive comments and suggestions. With regard to the regional dimension of the situation, the Administrator had spoken earlier about his mission to the Great Lakes region. Rwanda's problems were similar to those of countries in the same area or "region". Therefore, there was a school of thought that there was a need for a regional approach in the Great Lakes area, which included Rwanda. There was also a possibility that UNDP could develop an initiative that would look at water, education, health, good governance, income-generating activities, and labour-intensive activities, which were areas of focus common to all of the countries in the Great Lakes region, and address them in terms of returnees, displaced persons, and vulnerable groups. The Government of Rwanda was keen to move ahead in that direction and to ensure that activities at the regional level were linked with national activities.

201. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Rwanda (DP/CCF/RWA/1).

UNFPA assistance to the Government of Rwanda (DP/FPA/RWA/4)

202. Several delegations supported the proposed country programme and emphasized the importance of donor coordination. One delegation stated that it would welcome more detailed information on the Government's reaction to the programme. Another delegation was very pleased with the programme's emphasis on strengthening adolescent reproductive health and women's empowerment. It stressed the importance of furthering the advancement of women. The same delegation was satisfied with the substantive aspects of the programme, including the collaboration with other donors. Another delegation welcomed the harmonization of programmes by UNFPA and UNDP and stated that it would like to know more about the envisaged cooperation with other donors, including with regard to HIV/AIDS prevention. Citing paragraph 20 of the document, the delegation noted that the terminology pertaining to gender equity and equality did not conform with that of the Fourth World Conference on Women and should be amended.

203. Another delegation was pleased that the Fund would take the lead on adolescent reproductive health and focus attention on the issue of teen

pregnancy. One delegation inquired if consideration had been given to raising funds for Rwanda through the United Nations Foundation. Another delegation, noting that the situation of women in Rwanda was of great concern, was pleased with the Fund's focus on that area. Another delegation wondered if the demographic statistics on Rwanda were correct and noted that the provision of training in the area of reproductive health was of vital importance. The delegation was concerned that the programme, which seemed very ambitious, had a low budget. The delegation requested further information on the role of UNAIDS in Rwanda. Another delegation also asked for more information about inter-agency coordination on HIV/AIDS prevention, particularly in emergency situations. The delegation inquired as to how the lessons learned during the past cycle of assistance would be reflected in the new programme, and in particular, how South-South cooperation would be implemented.

204. One delegation asked about the criteria used to select the five prefectures where the programme would be implemented and inquired if assistance would be provided to other prefectures where the remaining 60 per cent of Rwanda's population resided. The delegation called attention to two different figures given for the maternal mortality rate, 210 per 100,000 live births on page 1 of the document and 800 per 100,000 live births on page 2, and wondered if such a deterioration could have occurred.

205. The delegation of Rwanda thanked the Executive Board, UNDP and UNFPA and underscored the need to increase training for capacity-building. The delegation noted that the proposed programme had been prepared in close collaboration with the Government. The delegation observed, however, that the document seemed to shy away from stating that the killings in 1994 were genocide and crimes against humanity. It added that the figure given in the document for the number of refugee returnees was incorrect.

206. The Director, Africa Division, thanked the delegations for their support and for their questions and comments. She noted that the UNDP Resident Coordinator had already provided a reply to the queries regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. She observed that UNFPA looked forward to working with Belgium in the area of adolescent reproductive health. She assured the Executive Board that the Fund would continue to provide support for women's empowerment and adolescent reproductive health. With regard to the question about terminology, she observed that the Fund had used the terminology from the Fourth World Conference on Women and would be willing to discuss it further after the meeting. She noted that a great deal of work needed to be done, including in the area of advocacy, regarding revision of the country's population policy. The Director stated that she did not consider the programme to be overambitious. She noted that the country's needs were great and the Fund hoped that its assistance would be catalytic and that other donors would also provide support. She indicated that the Fund supported South-South cooperation and Rwanda could be part of the East African Reproductive Health Network. She also noted that the South African Development Community (SADC) was setting up a population unit from which Rwanda could benefit. With regard to the selection of the prefectures, she stated that the criteria included population concentration, accessibility and security. She added that it was not possible for the Fund to cover all the prefectures because of inadequate resources. Concerning the use of the term genocide, she noted that in fact she had used the term in her

introductory remarks. With regard to the figures on the number of refugees, she stated that those figures constantly kept changing and the Fund had used the latest figures available at the time that the country programme was developed.

207. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Rwanda (DP/FPA/RWA/4).

C. Mali

First country cooperation framework for Mali (DP/CCF/MLI/1 and Corr.1)

208. The Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, presented the CCF for Mali to the Executive Board. Currently, Mali had some very positive development prospects. While Mali was one of the poorest countries in the world, the Government took development seriously and put combating poverty as its top priority. The health and education systems had been reviewed and 10-year plans for the two sectors would soon be presented. A large-scale decentralization process was under way and macroeconomic management and fiscal discipline were well established. In addition, Mali had managed to resolve an internal conflict peacefully and constructively. He observed that Mali was among the African countries where the percentage of women ministers was one of the highest. Although Mali had had difficulties during the elections held the previous year, certain sectors of society and certain people of goodwill had involved themselves to find a solution and the socio-political stability of the nation was in no way jeopardized. The strength of social capital in Mali was a key element in resolving the conflict in the north of the country. The CCF requested that UNDP continue to provide support for national efforts towards lasting peace. The Government also desired UNDP to provide technical assistance in support of a proposal on a moratorium on small arms in the Economic Community of West African States.

209. Mali had undertaken, with the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, to carry out a major exercise to make the development assistance system more effective and nationally owned. The challenge would be to reorganize and strengthen management procedures and coordination of international aid flows, which, in Mali's case, represented more than one quarter of its gross national product. In accordance with its mandate, UNDP had become a special partner in that exercise. In the CCF, the Government had requested that UNDP support the implementation of reforms recommended by the Development Assistance Committee's report. Intensive consultations would be held in the immediate future to plan and implement the proposals that arose out of the study.

210. The target and the substance of the CCF of Mali focused on sustainable human development. UNDP had been requested to focus on poverty reduction and good governance through the appropriate government structures addressing those areas. The Deputy Assistant Administrator mentioned that Mali was a pilot UNDAF country and that an UNDAF document would be available in June 1998. Moreover, the Government would shortly announce a date for the next round-table meeting in Geneva. Very likely it would be held at the end of June or early July, when the

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national strategy to combat poverty, which was one of the central points of national policy and of the CCF, would be the main subject for discussion.

211. One delegation stated that it was pleased with the simultaneous consideration of the UNDP and UNFPA programmes for Mali, which made it possible to have a more complete picture of the efforts being carried out by the authorities in Mali to establish sustainable development. It also made it possible to see the consistency and complementarity of the actions of the two bodies. Regarding the preparation of the documents, the delegation inquired how the other donors had been involved, particularly at the field level, and how complementarity of the interventions was ensured. The Government of Mali had begun a determined effort to ensure good governance and combat poverty, as reflected in the CCF. The delegation noted positively that the priority interventions of UNDP and UNFPA met those concerns. With regard to the private sector, the CCF noted the establishment of a legal regulatory framework that would be flexible and contain built-in incentives. How would that programme fit in with a major programme relating to the private sector legal framework that was already under way? With regard to decentralization, the delegation asked how UNDP intended to involve municipalities and help to strengthen their competence following the elections.

212. Another delegation stated that it particularly appreciated the grass-roots private sector approach to addressing poverty alleviation. UNDP had been a strong ally of the programme of the delegation's Government to promote liberalization of the Malian economy. The delegation asked how the UNDAF process, which was being piloted in Mali, would affect programming decisions. The CCF indicated that there had been some problems in the use of the national execution modality. How was UNDP working to address those problems? And how did UNDP foresee the employment of civil society organizations, including NGOs and private sector entities, as executing agents? The CCF also noted that UNDP would continue to act as a facilitator and adviser on aid coordination and resource mobilization. How had UNDP assisted the Government in that respect? In addition, how would the programmes envisioned under the CCF interface with the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa? The delegation noted that UNDP and UNFPA had already collaborated on the implementation of the national population policy and the organization of a donor round table. The consideration of joint programming aimed at enhancing the status of women would be welcomed and it appeared that there was considerable potential for synergy in that regard. The delegation also questioned whether that was an area that could or would be examined in the UNDAF process.

213. One delegation noted that Mali's population in the UNDP document was listed as 9.2 million, while according to the UNFPA document, 10.8 million people lived in the country. The delegation would appreciate finding out which figure was correct. The delegation noted that the CCF brought to light the problem of refocusing interventions. UNDP intended to intervene in the areas of the productive sector and basic infrastructure, and the delegation wondered whether that was properly within the purview of UNDP. The delegation also noted that there were other organizations working in the area of eradicating guinea worm disease. UNDP was not the organization best placed to deal with the subject. In addition, the development of new activities to clean up urban and peri-urban

areas, new and renewable sources of energy, and small-scale mining were not appropriate areas of focus for UNDP.

214. Another delegation observed that since Mali was a pilot UNDAF country, it welcomed all the efforts made in that area. At the same time, the delegation would like to have an explanation of how the actual UNDAF was implemented in the field. The CCF also mentioned interventions in the area of sectoral investment programmes, and the delegation asked how UNDP would collaborate in the sectoral investment programmes or a joint programming process with the Bretton Woods institutions. The delegation also noted that it welcomed the collaborative work carried out between UNDP and UNFPA in implementing the national population policy in the area of AIDS. It asked for an explanation on the indication in the CCF of problems or constraints of the newly adopted programme approach and the use of the national execution modality. The CCF also mentioned that particular attention should be paid to technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). In what fields would the TCDC modality be appropriate?

215. One delegation noted that UNDP had in recent years been an important channel for its country's development cooperation with Mali. The speaker commended the good working relationship between UNDP and the Government of Mali. UNDP priority areas were well aligned with the country's own development priorities. The two priority areas - poverty elimination and good governance - also corresponded well to the priority areas of the speaker's Government. The Government of Mali had recently expressed a wish for stronger coordination of development efforts in the country. It was therefore important that UNDP continue to assist the Malian authorities in that area, within a sectoral approach and the framework provided by UNDAF.

216. One delegation stated that the CCF was an example of the cooperation of different funds and programmes in one framework. As the experiment with UNDAF took place, what were the lessons learned and how would they affect UNDP programming? Answers to those questions would assist in the development of a common framework for the World Bank and the United Nations system. The delegation would welcome the report on UNDAF scheduled to be available in June. The priorities of the CCF came close to the priorities of the delegation's Government in its own cooperation with Mali. However, the delegation expressed concern about coordination with other external donors in Mali. Apart from the CCF, UNDP should involve donors at an early stage, not just after a project had been formulated, in order to ask for a contribution. Furthermore, what was the added value of UNDP when a UNDP project became the financial responsibility of cost-sharing donors? Another problem was the tendency of UNDP to create additional project structures.

217. One delegation noted that lessons learned through past cooperation would benefit future programming and lessen the difficulties in implementing programmes while contributing to the strengthening of national execution. The delegation appreciated the focus on the important areas of poverty elimination, good governance, democracy, and post-conflict management and observed that those areas were similar to the focus of UNSIA. The delegation asked for more information about complementarity between the two programmes. The speaker also commended the participatory approach and the role of the private sector included in the programme. It was his delegation's hope that the harmonized programme

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cycles of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF would lead to a greater degree of coordination and complementarity of programme activities, with a view to ensuring optimum use of resources, among other relevant United Nations bodies.

218. Another delegation observed that the situation analysis in the CCF was in line with the many different concerns and priorities of the Government of Mali, and congratulated UNDP on its close cooperation with local authorities, including civil society and the private sector. The delegation asked about the connection between the CCF, other country programmes and UNDAF. There were other documents that had not been addressed, such as the national strategy for the fight against poverty or the World Bank document on growth and development beyond the year 2000. Would the positions in those documents dovetail with UNDP activities in Mali? In addition, UNDP had been providing technical assistance in Mali for over 25 years. The delegation wondered if there were any intention to take stock of the situation and analyse results thus far, in order to draw upon lessons learned.

219. The UNDP Resident Representative and Resident Coordinator in Mali responded to delegations' comments and queries. Regarding the relationship between UNDAF and the CCF, the reality of the situation was that, following traditional practices, each of the United Nations funds and programmes in Mali had negotiated its own current programme with the Government. As delegations were aware, the Secretary-General had proposed the idea of UNDAF in 1997 as a pilot or "as if" exercise in a number of countries; thus, formally, the situation remained that of one programme per agency. The UNDAF was a parallel exercise, the results of which would be disseminated in June of the current year. The UNDP Resident Representative stated that he was not sure what mechanism would be used to present the results of the pilot exercises. However, the UNDAF exercise was well advanced in Mali, and a first draft of the framework had already been prepared. On 8 May there would be a meeting in Bamako, to which all were invited, to discuss the draft UNDAF and to make comments on the exercise. But the fact remained that the UNDAF would not provide a formal programming basis at that point in time. With regard to the World Bank, its full involvement and participation in the UNDAF exercise was very much appreciated, as was the case for the country strategy note (CSN) formally adopted by the Government the previous year. The CSN included the World Bank on an equal basis with United Nations agencies, as did the preparatory activities of the UNDAF. Of course, the World Bank had its own programming instrument, the country assistance strategy, which was not likely to be formally affected by the UNDAF, whatever happened in the future. The UNDP Resident Representative felt that it was everyone's hope at the field level that the UNDAF would eventually become the only programming document for the United Nations system in each country. Thus, it was possible that in the future, the representatives of programme country Governments would present their UNDAFs to the United Nations.

220. To address the process of preparing CCFs and related questions, the UNDP Resident Representative observed that the process was that UNDP prepared an advisory note addressed to the concerned Government, including a situation analysis and the UNDP views on the upcoming programme, which, in turn, the Government drew on in preparing the CCF. In late August 1997, there had been a major gathering in Bamako, at which all development partners, civil society, NGOs, and government ministries were invited to discuss a draft of the advisory

note for Mali. All views expressed at that meeting were taken into account in the preparation of the final version submitted to the Government. Subsequently, it was up to the Government to prepare its CCF. The Government had consulted UNDP on preparation of the CCF and a relationship between the advisory note and the CCF had been established. The concerns expressed in the advisory note were reflected in the Government's CCF.

221. With regard to questions about the private sector, there had been a sectoral round-table meeting on the subject in November 1996, a government-led exercise supported by UNDP. One of the outcomes of the sectoral meeting was a request for UNDP to continue to support the Government in the area of the private sector. The UNDP Resident Representative noted that there was a support programme at the level of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance to harmonize what had been done in Mali on the regulatory framework within a broader framework; UNDP supported those efforts. Beyond that, UNDP had been requested to continue to promote efforts in the private sector arena in a variety of ways, which could certainly be reviewed to see if there were joint themes among the programmes.

222. A question was raised about the situation of municipalities in the process of decentralization. UNDP was awaiting the outcome of the municipal elections. Support was provided through the Government's decentralization mission, which would define how the local governments to be created shortly would operate, as well as their relationship with various financing sources, such as donors and the central Government. UNDP continued to help the mission define those modalities, and once the new municipal structures had been put in place, it would become clearer how UNDP would provide support in the future.

223. There were also some questions on national execution and the programme approach. There were certainly some problems with the national execution modality. It had been a priority and policy of the Government to proceed as rapidly as possible with national execution and some three quarters of the programme in the last year had been carried out under the national execution modality. Much more training needed to take place. The capacities of the government entities responsible for national execution were not always up to the required level; while many of the problems in that area had been resolved, their resolution was quite labour-intensive. Thus, there would be a much greater emphasis on training, which was necessary on a continuing basis, because of the turnover of government staff. UNDP favoured the strengthening of a central national execution support unit within the Government, which could take over the responsibility not only of training but also of supervising national executing agents' responsibilities. The programme approach was an extremely complex and difficult approach to master. In the abstract, it was logical and seemed doable, but in reality, it was an enormous challenge to elaborate such an analytically complex approach in a context where activities were ongoing and parameters changed from month to month. UNDP continued to work on the programme approach and hoped to manage to adopt it by the end of the year. Currently, there were groupings of activities in a programmatic manner, but each activity had its own formal management in a financial sense and all that could be done at the operational and substantive level was to ensure synergy and coherence between the different elements.

224. A project was envisaged to help manage the use of NGOs and civil society organizations as executing agents and to provide funds for those organizations, but it had not yet been launched. Both the country office and the Government were committed, contingent on the required government approval of specific organizations. The interface of the UNDP programme with UNSIA had been discussed and analysed at great length. UNSIA had been found to be an excellent framework, and the policies of the Government of Mali, which, in turn, were reflected in the UNDP programme, were commensurate with the goals of UNSIA, which validated much of the UNDP programme, especially in terms of sectoral strategies in several sectors, as described in the CCF. The UNDAF would address United Nations system-wide efforts to promote women's issues and women's participation.

225. Regarding the discrepancy between the population figures provided in the UNDP and UNFPA documents, a population census was under way, which would help to clarify the subject. Evidently, the different estimates were the result of the varying methodologies currently used; the common country assessment in the UNDAF would ensure that a single figure for the population of a country would be used throughout the United Nations system in the future. As for work to eradicate guinea worm disease, UNDP had been involved through a modest trust fund financed by an NGO from Malaysia for a particular guinea worm project. That project was coming to a close, but the Government had asked UNDP to continue to be involved in the preparation of a plan of action in the field, even though there were a number of other major actors involved. The UNDP interest in artisanal mining was a matter of protection of the environment. Serious environmental poisoning resulted from artisanal mining in Mali, which took place on a very large scale. One estimate said that 1 million people (10 per cent of the population) depended directly or indirectly on artisanal mining. Artisanal mining involved the use of chemicals that could be very harmful to the environment and UNDP had been asked to help to address that problem. In terms of the census, UNFPA was the major actor with the Government. UNDP had intended to provide financial support for the census but could not because of new financial restrictions. Regarding TCDC, the University of Mali and India, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tunisia were currently collaborating in the area of agricultural research in a TCDC context. More generally, UNDP involvement in TCDC was related to the creation of databases for easy access, in order to set up TCDC-type relationships.

226. One delegation had inquired whether UNDP could involve donors earlier in consultations on the development of projects. As a matter of policy, UNDP always attempted to do that - the consultation processes between donors in Mali were extremely intense and at times, because there were so many meetings, the result had been that participation had not always been possible or at the appropriate level in every meeting. It was possible that at times a particular development partner might not be able to participate in a particular process, simply because there was nobody available to do so. As for the comment on UNDP building bureaucratic structures in projects, the Resident Representative expressed surprise, since UNDP took the injunction not to create new and parallel structures to those of the Government very seriously. UNDP always tried to work through existing structures - whether governmental or non-governmental. The only example he could think of when UNDP had not done so was in the area of the reintegration of the ex-combatants after the conflict in the north of Mali. A programme had been set up for the demobilization and

reintegration of ex-combatants, which cost $10 million and to which a number of countries had contributed. That was the only separate structure - by its nature time-bound - that was set up with UNDP funding, although it was under the authority of the Government, not UNDP. In the evaluation of the programme, its shortcomings were attributed to the fact that not enough money had been spent on administration of the programme, because in designing it the Government and UNDP had tried to be as economical as possible.

227. The Deputy Assistant Administrator, Regional Bureau for Africa, thanked the Executive Board for its support. He stressed that UNDP cooperation in Mali was strongly linked with the goals of UNSIA. On the subject of aid coordination and resource mobilization, he emphasized the importance of the joint Government/ Development Assistance Committee/UNDP aid review in terms of strengthening development coordination in Mali. He also emphasized the upcoming round-table meeting of donors, which UNDP hoped would, inter alia, establish a link between the aid review and the round-table process and be an important instrument to mobilize additional resources both for poverty issues and for the decentralization programme. UNDP would make every attempt to involve the donor community early in the programming process. Also, the aim of UNDP was to strengthen human and institutional capacity, not to create parallel structures in order to be able to implement projects faster.

228. One delegation wished to clarify its question on modalities for involvement of donors. There was no doubt that the organization of the meeting in August 1997 had led to the absence of certain donors. His delegation asked whether it would be the intention of UNDP in the future to involve representatives of donors in the annual reviews and the mid-term review of the programme. The delegation also stated that it was curious that in two official United Nations documents submitted at the same session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, there were two different figures for population. It would be desirable that when the documents were submitted there be harmonization of the figures.

229. The Resident Coordinator explained why the meeting referred to by the delegation was held on 30 August 1997. The calendar was very tight for preparation of the documents for the meeting. He stressed that all partners would be involved in all of the reviews of the programme.

230. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Mali (DP/CCF/MLI/1 and Corr.1 (English only)).

UNFPA assistance to the Government of Mali (DP/FPA/MLI/4)

231. One delegation commented on the very high maternal mortality rate in the country and wondered if sufficient resources had been allocated to efforts to reduce it. The delegation added that in the document the term "gender equality" and not "gender equity" should be used. Another delegation asked how the proposed programme's implementation would relate to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process and noted that it would welcome joint programming among United Nations agencies to enhance the status of women. Another delegation inquired about the different population figures provided by UNFPA and UNDP. The delegation wondered if the UNFPA field office staffing was

adequate. The delegation added that it was pleased to note the reference to cooperation with the World Bank.

232. Another delegation commended the proposed programme's district-specific approach and the collaboration between the Fund and UNDP in implementing the national population policy. The delegation appreciated the Fund's contribution to the creation of the Office of the Commissioner for the Advancement of Women, which undertook activities to promote and enhance the status of women. The delegation asked if there would be inter-agency cooperation for the 1998 census. Another delegation endorsed the Fund's proposed programme, which would promote and advance reproductive health. The delegation was pleased with the exchanges of experience between Indonesia, Senegal and Mali, undertaken in the context of South-South cooperation. The delegation hoped that a high degree of complementarity and cooperation would prevail among the United Nations agencies active in the country.

233. In her response, the Director, Africa Division, noted that the UNDP Resident Representative had already responded to the query regarding the UNDAF process in Mali and the population figures. With regard to the figures on the maternal mortality rate, she observed that there had always been a variance between the United Nations figures and those used in-country. She hoped that as the methodologies became more refined the gaps in the figures would be closed. Regarding the staffing of the field office, she noted that it was no different from that in other countries. She added that national professional project personnel would be used to assist in programme monitoring and evaluation. The Director added that the Fund was collaborating with UNICEF, USAID and Canada on the 1998 census. Also there was an Inter-Agency Census Coordinating Committee at the global level to discuss issues relating to the conduct of censuses and resource mobilization. She added that UNFPA had endeavoured to ensure that both reproductive health and population were reflected in the health and education Sector Investment Programmes.

234. The Executive Board approved the country programme for Mali (DP/FPA/MLI/4 and Corr.1 (French only)).

235. The delegation of Mali thanked the Executive Board.

236. The delegation of the Government of Mali expressed its thanks to the Executive Board and to the secretariat for the excellent documentation made available. The delegation also commended the quality of the information provided by the Director of the Africa Division of UNFPA, the UNDP Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, and the UNDP Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator in Mali. The delegation thanked the Executive Board for its approval of the UNDP and UNFPA programmes. The delegation's Government would continue, with the support of its development partners, particularly UNDP and UNFPA, to implement its economic and social development programme for the well-being of the population of Mali. The Government had made combating poverty and good governance high priorities in its medium- and long-term policies for development. As noted by many speakers, the results already achieved in those areas were positive, illustrating the relevance of Mali's national projects and their consistency with the objectives set by UNDP and UNFPA. The delegation also expressed its satisfaction with the

dynamic and pragmatic action by the United Nations team in Bamako, particularly through the UNDAF, and with the committed and intelligent leadership of the UNDP Resident Representative.

VI. UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

237. Under this agenda item, the Executive Board considered two sub-items, the recruitment of UNFPA country representatives and the criteria and mechanisms for budget adjustments in the event of any significant shortfall in income.

238. Concerning the first sub-item, the Executive Director reiterated how important the presence of country representatives was for the success of UNFPA programmes. She restated that the needs of the selected countries were real and noted that there was a golden opportunity for the world community to make real progress in promoting the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. In that regard, programme support from UNFPA was important and the presence of a UNFPA representative was critical. The Executive Director noted that members of the Executive Board had learned first-hand how small the Fund's offices were in programme countries and how dedicated and hardworking the staff were in those countries. She underscored that the seven posts to be recruited had already been approved by the Board in decision 97/26 and added that the Fund's financial situation was improving and thus justified moving ahead with filling the seven posts. With regard to the informal data sheet on the resource situation that had been circulated earlier, the Executive Director noted that an updated data sheet would be made available formally at the annual session of the Board.

239. One delegation, while agreeing with the need to fill the seven posts, considered the request to be very modest. The delegation noted that while it had been ready to approve the draft decision that had been introduced earlier, it now wished to table a new draft decision. It did so in the interest of the organization and not in its own national interest. The delegation observed that endorsing the filling of the seven posts would lead one or more donors to draw conclusions that could have an overall negative impact on the funding of UNFPA. The same delegation added that the financial information provided on the projected 1998 income included firm pledges, payments already made and some educated guesses on future contributions and that the figure of $345 million was less than half of the income projection of $720 million on which the biennial budget was based.

240. Following a brief discussion in which numerous delegations noted that a separate decision was not required on the matter and after a subsequent informal consultation among interested delegations, the Executive Board adopted the following decision:

98/8. Approval of recruitment of country representatives

The Executive Board

1. Recalls Executive Board decision 97/26;

2. Takes note of the Executive Director's comments together with the comments made by delegations on this matter;

3. Authorizes the Executive Director of UNFPA to begin recruitment of seven country representatives, as proposed in decision 97/26 in line with the availability of resources;

4. Requests the Executive Director to table in writing a financial update to the Board at its annual session.

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241. Following the adoption of the decision, the delegation that had introduced the second draft decision noted that it was very pleased with the outcome and that it formally withdrew its earlier draft decision.

242. One delegation noted that with the payment of a $25 million contribution by one country and with the statement by another that it would maintain its contribution at its previous level, the delegation interpreted the decision to mean that there was no need for the Executive Director to come back to the Executive Board on that matter.

243. Another delegation observed that its interpretation of paragraph 3 of the decision, as amended, was that at present the financial situation as described by the secretariat was not a basis for recruitment of seven new posts; the delegation referred in that regard to the statement that it had made after decision 97/26 had been adopted at the third regular session 1997, and looked forward to receiving additional information in the future about the Fund's budgetary situation.

244. One delegation clarified that its country's contribution in 1998 would be at the same level in national currency as in 1997.

245. Another delegation underscored that it understood that the consensus reached had included all the delegations that spoke after the decision had been adopted. The matter had therefore been decided by the Executive Board, and there was no need for the Executive Director of UNFPA to report back to the Board on paragraph 3 of the adopted decision. A request had been made of the Executive Director and that request was contained in paragraph 4 of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

246. The President confirmed that the text of the decision as read out by the Vice-President of the Bureau had been very clear and the Executive Board had adopted the decision.

247. In accordance with Executive Board decision 97/26, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) presented an oral report on the criteria and mechanisms for budget adjustments in the event of any significant shortfall in income. He reiterated the point made earlier by the Executive Director in her opening statement that resources were the key to programme delivery and essential for maintaining a critical mass and stability in staff capacity. Such capacity was vital for the Fund to carry out its mandated activities. The staff

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complement was financed by the Fund's support budget. Historically, the support budget, in dollar terms, had grown marginally, in line with the increasing income of the Fund. Yet, such budget expenditures, as a percentage of income, had stayed within a relatively narrow range of around 16 to 20 per cent. In periods of resource constraints, UNFPA had been very judicious and proactive in containing costs in the budget without imperiling programme delivery or the stability of staffing capacity. The Fund was fully committed to continuing that in the future.

248. With regard to the criteria and mechanisms that the Fund would use to control and contain budget costs in line with resources, in the event of any significant shortfall in income, the Deputy Executive Director noted that the Fund would: (a) protect programme delivery while containing costs; (b) implement on a priority basis the essential components of the budget; (c) require beneficiaries of services to pay for their fair share, especially in the area of information materials; and (d) improve efficiency through intensifying ongoing efforts to streamline administrative procedures, enhance good management practices and increase the use of modern information technology.

249. In accordance with the above-mentioned criteria, the Fund would continue to: delay recruitment of staff as far as practicable, with a corresponding reduction in staff costs, i.e., optimize the post vacancy rate in a manner that could contain budget costs; extend the period between staff reassignments from one duty station to another, thereby reducing the corresponding shipment and installation costs; combine missions in one trip, thereby containing travel costs; and introduce and/or increase fees that individuals, groups, or organizations paid for UNFPA services, for example, procurement services, publications, seminars and research. The Deputy Executive Director noted that income derived from such fees would reduce the corresponding support budget costs. Additionally, the Fund would reorganize functions, activities or units with similar objectives and client focus; further streamline administrative and financial procedures to reduce the cost of delivering services and further deploy modern information technology to replace manual processes; and improve revenue collection ensuring that all income/contributions and debts owed were collected to maximize investment income. The Deputy Executive Director emphasized that the Fund's future depended in large part upon the resources mobilized and the support budget needed to carry out the Fund's mandate. Therefore, it was important to assess the support budget from a long-term perspective and to link fiscal discipline with the organization's required capacity for programme delivery.

250. One delegation, while appreciating the oral report, encouraged UNFPA to put in place, as a matter of sound management, several of the mechanisms mentioned in the Deputy Executive Director's report, even if there was no significant shortfall in resources. Another delegation asked whether it was possible for UNFPA to use the operational reserve if there was a sudden drop in income.

251. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) agreed that several of the mechanisms listed should be a routine part of the management of UNFPA. He confirmed that the Fund was already exercising many of those measures. With regard to the question on the use of the operational reserve, he stated that while the Fund was legally authorized to draw down from the

operational reserve, it tried not to do so primarily by pursuing a more proactive programming process, namely, anticipating income as accurately as possible and containing the costs of the administrative budget. The Deputy Executive Director noted that in the past the Fund had dipped into the operational reserve on a few occasions.

252. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on the criteria and mechanisms for budget adjustments in the event of any significant shortfall in income.

VII. UNFPA: TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

253. In accordance with decision 97/27, the Executive Board reviewed the "Report on an assessment of the TSS specialist posts at headquarters and regional levels", a report on the outcome of an external evaluation of the Fund's Technical Support Services (TSS) specialist posts that had been undertaken in response to Executive Board decision 95/13. The review was conducted in relation to document DP/FPA/1997/16, which was presented to the Board at its third regular session in 1997.

254. In her introductory statement, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted that the UNFPA TSS system was a unique arrangement in the United Nations system. Its uniqueness arose from its decentralized, multidisciplinary and inter-agency approach, anticipatory in many ways of the Secretary-General's reform initiatives. As a new system, it had faced many challenges in the first years of its development. UNFPA and its partner agencies had learned from that experience and had developed innovative responses, with the aim of better serving the needs of recipient countries.

255. The TSS system, at its first two levels - national expertise and the Country Support Teams (CSTs) - was well on track towards the achievement of its major goals, which included improving the national availability of technical knowledge, analysis and research for use in population programmes; accelerating national self-reliance through the use and development of national and regional expertise; and ensuring an integrated and coordinated multidisciplinary approach to population programmes. UNFPA offices reported that they were increasingly relying on national expertise for project development and implementation, and that CSTs had proved very effective in addressing multisectoral programme backstopping needs. However, at the third level of the TSS system - specialist posts at agency headquarters - improvements had been less noticeable and, in recent months, UNFPA and its partner agencies were concentrating their joint efforts on making improvements in that area.

256. One response had been the improvement of linkages between CST advisers and TSS specialists. Since mid-1997, the more widespread availability of the Internet had facilitated the frequent exchange of information and advice between TSS specialists, CST advisers and UNFPA staff, both in countries and at headquarters. UNFPA was working on a TSS website and other ways to improve communication within the TSS system. Thematic workshops would be undertaken to provide both TSS specialists and CST advisers with opportunities to discuss priority population issues in a multidisciplinary way. In a second response,

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the agencies had gradually expanded the substantive resources of the TSS system by providing increased access to a variety of technical advice and inputs, within their own regular programme activities.

257. A third notable response was the establishment by UNFPA, in mid-January 1998, of a Coordination Branch as one of three branches of the Fund's new Technical and Policy Division (TPD). The Coordination Branch was responsible for the policy, management and substantive coordination of the TSS system. It promoted discussions on substantive and policy issues and greater collaborative undertakings within the system. It would support and monitor the work of the TSS specialists, including reviewing their annual work plans. The Branch would periodically issue "TSS Updates", highlighting interesting developments in the system. The Deputy Executive Director stressed that the TSS system could not perform effectively without its third level of expertise. TSS specialists were needed to undertake interregional comparisons and conduct multiregional analyses. Through their state-of-the-art reviews, technical backstopping, and advocacy work, they played a critical role in ensuring that the TSS system as a whole better served the recipient countries. Significant improvements at the third level of the TSS system would be achieved by the ongoing efforts to streamline the specialists' functions, strengthen work plan coordination, and improve collaboration among CST advisers and TSS specialists.

258. The Deputy Executive Director reported that owing to communication problems and an insufficient critical mass of staff, the sub-teams for the countries of Central Asia and the Caribbean had not performed as effectively as had been hoped for; hence it had been decided that the concerned countries would be better served from the larger teams. She informed the Executive Board that the sub-teams would be relocated back to their respective base CSTs. Also, the Fund planned to move the CST in Santiago, Chile, to Mexico City, in order to make services more readily available to the countries most in need, which were primarily countries in the Caribbean and Central America.

259. Several delegations appreciated the introductory statement of the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) and the informal briefing that had been organized earlier; however, they were disappointed that no new documentation had been prepared on the TSS system. Numerous delegations welcomed the fact that the newly established Coordination Branch in the Technical and Policy Division of UNFPA would coordinate and monitor TSS arrangements. Some delegations asked that the Executive Board be kept informed of improvements and progress.

260. One delegation, also on behalf of another, noted that certain criticisms raised in the January 1997 evaluation report had not been responded to, which led to doubts on the cost-efficiency ratio of the TSS specialists. Areas that needed further clarification included the terms of reference for recruitment and the command chain for the system. The delegation stated that the technical experts seemed to devote less than 30 per cent of their time to technical backstopping and about 60 per cent to inter-agency advocacy. The delegation preferred that that ratio be reversed. The same delegation asked about the five TSS posts at United Nations Headquarters and enquired about the nature of the work. The delegation added that it would like to support TSS activities in principle under two conditions: (a) relationships between the different actors of the TSS system should be clearly defined and a clear mandate be assigned to

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the TSS and (b) the cost of the TSS should be strictly limited for UNFPA. The TSS system should be a transitory process aiming at a real transfer of competencies. The delegation recommended that an agreement on the role of TSS specialists be signed between UNFPA and the other United Nations agencies.

261. Another delegation appreciated the attention focused on the TSS specialists during recent months but noted that the concerns raised in the external evaluation of the TSS system had not yet been answered. The delegation noted that it was important to ask certain questions again: What was expected from the TSS system? Were the present arrangements the most workable? Were there alternatives? Were there incompatibilities in the system? The delegation added that the TSS system should be viewed not solely as a UNFPA responsibility, but due consideration should be given to the role and responsibilities of partner agencies. Another delegation recognized that it was not an easy task to lead the way in the change process and appreciated the fact that improvements made following the findings of the external evaluation had benefited the partner agencies.

262. One delegation stated that the TSS system was a very important issue and that providing technical support to field operations and advocating for population issues in the TSS partner agencies were keys to the success of UNFPA country programmes and to the broader effort of the United Nations system to support the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Noting that the budget imposed constraints on UNFPA field operations, the delegation observed that the Fund could not afford the TSS system that had been described in the external evaluation of 1996. The delegation added that the CSTs, and those TSS specialists closest to field operations, seemed to function relatively well; however, there appeared to be a lack of focus as regards the functions, work plans and oversight of TSS specialists at agency headquarters. The delegation welcomed the setting up of the UNFPA Coordination Branch and asked that there be a better flow of information to the Executive Board on TSS system changes and performance. The delegation recommended that UNFPA and the partner agencies use the ICPD+5 preparatory process to rethink the future shape and functioning of the TSS system. The same delegation stated that the partner agencies should also move towards fully integrating population perspectives in their strategies and develop in-house technical capacity in that regard. The delegation supported funding the TSS through 1999, and added that before the Executive Board took up the next biennial budget, UNFPA should provide proposals for a future system that provided technical backstopping and advocacy and was cost-effective, performance-driven and focused on field operations.

263. Another delegation, while noting that it had observed recent improvement in the functioning of the TSS system, underlined the following: in reviewing the TSS specialists posts, the Executive Board should focus not only on management and coordination issues but should explore structural problems; and the operationalization of the CSTs had shown remarkable improvement in the technical support provided to UNFPA country programmes and should be strengthened. The same delegation asked if TSS specialists provided direct technical support to countries as did the CSTs and, if so, what percentage of their work constituted such support. The delegation suggested that in 1999 the TSS specialist posts should remain at the 1998 level and requested the Executive Director to

re-evaluate the TSS system in 1999 and seek a packaged solution to the issues pertaining to the TSS specialists.

264. One delegation stated that it attached great importance to the TSS system, which had the potential to bring value-added to the Fund and its partner agencies, provided that it was well designed and well administered. While noting that according to the findings of the external evaluation the system was suboptimal, the delegation was encouraged that several improvements had been made to address the shortcomings noted in the evaluation. The same delegation stated that it was ready to recommend that the current agreement on the TSS be extended, on a temporary basis, through 1999; however, full consideration should be given to the following issues: (a) streamlining procedures; (b) increasing coordination and rationalizing current arrangements with partner agencies; (c) increasing efforts to recruit high-quality candidates for TSS posts and ensuring orientation training for them; (d) establishing clear agreements with agencies with mutually agreed-upon goals; and (e) providing the Executive Board with a report illustrating the progress being made. The delegation concluded that an enhanced TSS system, developed in a more holistic way, could have a more synergistic effect among partner agencies and contribute to addressing ICPD follow-up in a more coherent manner.

265. Another delegation, noting that the TSS system was an important mechanism for ICPD follow-up, expressed concern regarding the functioning of the TSS specialist posts and urged UNFPA and its partner agencies to take up the issues seriously and keep the Executive Board informed about improvements achieved. The delegation stated that it was important for each partner agency to internalize the activities carried out by the TSS specialists and to internalize ICPD follow-up. The delegation noted that it was prepared to authorize funding of the TSS specialist posts up to the end of 1999, on condition that the Executive Board receive a report from UNFPA on a thorough overall review of the TSS system, particularly the TSS specialists posts located at the headquarters of partner agencies. The delegation wished to be kept informed of improvements and was interested in formal or informal progress reports.

266. One delegation stated that the TSS could be an important instrument in making population issues well known and accepted throughout the United Nations system and in countries. The delegation noted that it had expected an analytical document prepared on the basis of the evaluation report and the Executive Board's discussion on the TSS at its third regular session 1997. The delegation observed that while some positive changes had been reported in the introductory remarks and at the informal briefing, fundamental issues had not been dealt with. The main problem appeared to be the unclear mandate of the TSS specialists at agency headquarters. Another problem was that agencies other than UNFPA had failed to incorporate population issues in their own policies; they regarded population matters as the Fund's business. The same delegation underscored that in the coming year, before the celebration of ICPD+5, a better arrangement should be made to ensure that population issues were taken seriously by all agencies and organizations of the United Nations, including UNDP and UNICEF.

267. While appreciating the informal briefing and the useful update provided by UNFPA, one delegation noted that the purpose, role and function of the TSS

specialist posts still remained unclear. The delegation stated that it was not evident that the TSS specialists were carrying out the synthesizing, lesson-learning and disseminating role that had been expected. UNFPA and partner agencies needed to reach agreement on explicit and clear outcome-oriented expectations associated with the TSS specialist posts. Otherwise, it would be difficult to judge the effectiveness and value-added of those posts. The delegation wished to learn more about the role of the Coordination Branch in improving the coherence, coordination and outcomes of the TSS system. The same delegation added that UNFPA country programmes and the CSTs needed to be able to access the best available advice and should have the ability to obtain know-how from the TSS specialists or any other source. The delegation stated that recommendations for strengthening the TSS system should be based on a thorough consideration and appraisal of: the purpose of the TSS system, particularly the TSS specialist posts; the effectiveness and value-added of current arrangements; the needs of priority programme countries; and alternative options for securing expertise and advice needed by CSTs and country programmes.

268. Another delegation noted that the TSS system was useful in strengthening technical capacity and essential in contributing important research work and disseminating, between and among regions, lessons learned. The delegation added that the TSS specialists played an important role in providing an interregional perspective and links with the debates going on within their respective agencies. The same delegation stated that it was important to overhaul the system to enable it to achieve its intended goals and added that there was a need to address the question of how the system would be funded after 1999. The delegation asked how the feedback mechanism functioned within the system, i.e., how expertise and materials gained at the country and subregional levels were fed back to the third level of the TSS in order to inform policy-formulation at the headquarters level; how was feedback coordinated to ensure complementarity of policies among the partner agencies; and how did the Fund propose to institutionalize and assess coordination, the flow of communication and an effective feedback system.

269. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) made a joint statement on behalf of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and FAO, the specialized agencies that were partners in the TSS system. He noted that the specialized agencies were united in their commitment to the success of the integrated TSS system, which they saw as a pioneering effort and a cost-effective tool for building national capacity in the field of population and reproductive health. He observed that the TSS system was an evolving one, and in recent months several changes had been introduced. He added that the originality of the system lay in the bringing together of normative and operational functions in multisectoral and multidisciplinary ways to provide the best assistance to programme countries. Following the independent evaluation, agreement had been reached among all partners of the system on the urgent need to implement measures for integrating the TSS specialist posts within the system, thereby ensuring effective linkage with the CSTs. To this end, a number of activities and experiments were under way and were described in the publication from the four agencies that had been made available to the Executive Board. The representative stated that the TSS specialists systematically

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identified and prioritized CST needs through mutual consultations, thematic workshops and seminars. Once a priority need had been identified the agencies set up a TSS specialist team tailored to meet the need, by pooling together the available multidisciplinary experience and expertise in order to produce a draft normative paper with operational recommendations. A dialogue then ensued with interested CST advisers through whom the normative and operational issues were refined. He noted that the agencies were now working more collaboratively in efforts to provide comprehensive, coherent and synchronized support to the CSTs. He observed that no alternative mechanism, at present, could achieve that in a more cost-effective way and added that with the establishment of a Coordination Branch at UNFPA, collaboration and working methods would be further systematized. He stated that the TSS specialist level was a valuable tool to enhance the performance of the TSS system and that TSS specialists were the frontline of population advocacy. Furthermore, the three-level system was a powerful and increasingly valuable tool for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

270. The representative of ILO, in addressing two of the issues raised during the discussion, noted that with regard to the value-added offered by the third level of the TSS, the specialists at agency headquarters added an interregional perspective to the work of the CSTs, as well as to country-level programmes. In addition to contributing to the knowledge base from each agency's perspective, the third level provided a means of utilizing the specific channels of each individual agency to address the population agenda. With regard to the issue of the coordination of the work plans and mandates of the TSS specialists at agency headquarters, the representative noted that with the establishment of the Coordination Branch at UNFPA, a mechanism was available for reviewing, coordinating and harmonizing the work plans of the TSS specialists. Synthesizing information and lessons learned and disseminating that and other technical information remained a specific responsibility of the TSS specialists.

271. One delegation affirmed support for UNFPA efforts on the TSS system and stated that having had the opportunity to conduct a close assessment of the CST in Thailand it could confirm that the system worked well. The delegation added that the existence of the TSS had enabled UNFPA to accelerate and increase the formulation and delivery of quality programmes.

272. In her response, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) thanked the delegations for their questions and comments and apologized that no new documentation on the TSS had been prepared, as the Fund had understood that there would be a discussion of the two earlier reports and an oral update on progress achieved. She added that, as requested by several delegations, the Fund would, in the future, and on an informal basis, keep the Executive Board updated on progress made in the TSS system. She underscored that the TSS system was not static and was supposed to be flexible in order to accommodate the changing needs of countries. She noted that as the end of the second phase of the TSS system approached, it was an appropriate time for a critical look at the options available, bearing in mind the best way to reach the goals of the system, particularly the key goal of national capacity-building. Thus, the Fund would examine the purposes, options and effectiveness of the TSS system. The Deputy Executive Director welcomed any suggestions the Executive Board might have in that regard. She noted that the job descriptions of the TSS specialists

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had been revised to focus more on the technical backstopping aspect. With reference to the question on TSS direct support to countries, the Deputy Executive Director noted that the prime role of the TSS specialists was to provide support to the CSTs. If they did become involved at the country level it ought to be for capacity-building, preferably in the form of training activities that benefited more than one country. Regarding the query on feedback, she stated that the CST advisers sent mission reports to their respective agencies; also, increasingly, they were preparing papers and noting lessons learned which were shared with the agencies. Those were some of the ways in which inputs and information from the country level were conveyed to the third level of the TSS system. She added that further attention would be given to enhancing the drawing, synthesizing and disseminating of lessons learned, which would be done more systematically with the establishment of the Coordination Branch. With regard to the query on the five posts at United Nations Headquarters, she informed the Executive Board that two posts were in the Population Division and three were in the Statistical Division. The two posts in the Population Division specialized in population and socio-economic policies and in the causes and consequences of population trends and variables. Those in the Statistical Division specialized in census survey methodologies, population information systems, and sampling. She added that originally there had been 12 posts but they had been reduced to 5.

273. The Director of the Technical and Policy Division informed the Executive Board that the Coordination Branch in TPD had been established to coordinate technical inputs within the Fund and also with other agencies and NGOs. The major function assigned to the Branch was to coordinate the activities of the TSS system, ensuring focused backstopping provided by the TSS specialists and the staff of TPD and the Fund's Geographical Divisions. Communication and information exchange would be enhanced through periodic release of TSS Updates and through the creation and use of a TSS website. He added that there was regular contact with the specialized agencies through the work plans, technical meetings and thematic workshops. Plans were under way to synthesize information from the progress reports of the eight CSTs and to issue, every six months, analytical reports on major emerging issues and lessons learned. The Coordination Branch would also disseminate to the CSTs and TSS specialists information on new technical developments of relevance for policy and would initiate, review and publish technical and policy papers and other relevant analyses in support of country programmes, prepared by members of the TSS/CST. In addition, it would explore avenues for mobilizing support for population programmes within the various departments and divisions of the specialized agencies participating in the TSS system. The Branch would also serve as the secretariat of the inter-agency task force that met annually to coordinate activities of the TSS system. Recruitment of the best qualified candidates for the TSS system remained a function of the Branch, and a transparent process would be ensured. The Director added that for certain areas, such as logistics management systems, consideration would be given to involving the private sector and NGOs providing support to the CSTs. He informed the Board that the periodic reports, papers and updates produced would also be made available to the Board.

274. The representative of UNESCO noted that his organization was fully committed to the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and to an effective and successful TSS partnership. He noted that education was a key

component of all the programmes and plans of action emerging from the recent major United Nations conferences. He stressed that population was a key concern not just for sustainable development but for all who were a part of the United Nations system, and looked forward to working with UNFPA on the challenges that lay ahead.

275. One delegation inquired about the discontinuation of the CST sub-team for the countries of Central Asia and wondered whether the CST based in Kathmandu, Nepal, would be able to serve the needs of those countries. Another delegation underscored the need to have transparency in the appointment of TSS experts, both national and international, and stated that all agencies must ensure a rational and transparent process. One delegation thanked the FAO representative for making a joint statement on behalf of four agencies and stated that it was encouraged by the reform spirit reflected in the joint statement.

276. In responding to the query regarding the CST sub-team in Kazakhstan, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted that the Fund had found that the process of utilizing sub-teams was cumbersome and that their small size did not allow for the critical mass necessary for the required multidisciplinary interaction. Thus, the sub-team based in Kazakhstan would join its base CST in Kathmandu, Nepal, and thereby enable the countries served to benefit from the expertise of a larger multidisciplinary team. With regard to the question relating to transparency in recruitment, the Deputy Executive Director stated that within the United Nations system, the TSS system was quite unique in that UNFPA and the partner agencies had to jointly agree on the candidates being recruited for the TSS and the CSTs. Also, UNFPA contributed, formally and informally, to the assessment of TSS and CST staff. She added that this contributed to a uniquely open, transparent and collaborative recruitment process.

277. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

98/6. UNFPA technical support services

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the Report on an Assessment of the Technical Support Services (TSS) Specialist Posts at Headquarters and Regional Levels (an independent evaluation report prepared for the United Nations Population Fund in 1997) and of the report of the Executive Director on the UNFPA technical support services system (DP/FPA/1997/16), submitted to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997, and in light of Executive Board decision 97/27;

2. Authorizes the continued funding of the TSS specialist posts until 31 December 1999 as proposed in document DP/FPA/1997/16;

3. Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to continue actively to seek workable solutions to the concerns raised in the independent evaluation report in dialogue with partner organizations, in particular on coordination, accountability, the communication between the three

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levels of the system and advocacy function of TSS specialists in the partner organizations;

4. Also requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to submit at the second regular session 1999 a brief progress report on the effectiveness of the improvements that have been implemented in the operation of the TSS system since the third regular session 1997;

5. Invites the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, in light of the recommendations arising from the ICPD+5 process and in consultation with partner agencies, to develop future options for (a) providing specialist support and advice to country support teams and country programmes through arrangements that utilize the best expertise available within the United Nations system and from other sources and (b) enhancing the involvement and contribution of relevant United Nations specialized agencies in taking forward and promoting the ICPD agenda;

6. Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to present these proposals in a report, including an analysis of the financial and budgetary aspects, to the Executive Board at its third regular session in 1999.

24 April 1998

VIII. UNFPA: STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

278. In accordance with Executive Board decision 97/29, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) presented an oral report on the status of staff training at UNFPA, focusing on recent developments and new directions that were envisioned. Recalling some of the main findings and recommendations of a 1996 evaluation of the Fund's training activities, the Deputy Executive Director reported that the Fund's staff training programme for 1997 had been designed taking those recommendations into consideration. The programme included the following initiatives: (a) internal reviews of existing training curricula, to match the upgrading of skills and competencies to meet organizational priorities, with an emphasis on the training needs of field staff; (b) a structured induction briefing/training programme for newly recruited UNFPA representatives; (c) a curriculum to build skills in applying the logical framework (logframe) in the programming process, and a training-of-trainers curriculum for cascade training on the logical framework; (d) the organization of a series of cost-effective regional workshops in the field for field staff and Country Support Team advisers on the logical framework; (e) collaboration with the United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy, to develop a training package for field staff on implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action; and (f) the offering of a distance-learning package entitled "The Capable Manager" offered by the Open University in conjunction with the United Nations Staff College.

279. Additionally, with the aim of making training/learning a more holistic activity involving all staff, the role of managers and supervisors in providing on-the-job training and coaching had been reinforced. Managers and supervisors

would now be increasingly responsible for fostering a learning environment, providing constant mentoring and assessing the impact of structured training on the job performance of staff members (in accordance with the performance appraisal review process). To facilitate that development, a portion of the field training budget had been decentralized in 1997, and UNFPA representatives had been given the authority to approve and authorize funds for local training activities.

280. In addition, at the beginning of 1998, the Office of Personnel and Training was established to oversee and coordinate the development of the Fund's human resources. The Fund planned to undertake a core competency study that would enable the development of a training strategy based on organizational needs. The revision of the training guidelines had nearly been completed. An evaluation of the Fund's training activities would be undertaken every two years, in line with the biennium budget cycle. These evaluations would also assess the cost-effectiveness of training/learning activities undertaken and their impact on the knowledge and performance of staff members. In that regard, the Training Branch had begun an internal evaluation of the logframe training conducted in 1997. New approaches in training were also being developed. For example, a computer-based training programme for financial and budgetary matters had been piloted, as well as distance training modules on specific management areas.

281. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) concluded by noting that stronger links with other United Nations training programmes were being fostered through participation in inter-agency training. For example, UNFPA representatives continued to attend courses on management of field coordination organized by the United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy; and the Fund's Training Branch, together with member organizations of the United Nations Development Group, had participated in the training of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) focal persons and had conducted UNDAF training in the pilot countries.

282. During the ensuing discussion, one delegation stated that it was particularly encouraged by the progress made on the logical framework training and the cascading of that training throughout the organization. The delegation expressed interest in receiving additional information on the internal evaluation of the logical framework training. Another delegation, noting that the Fund had taken a good step forward regarding staff training activities, inquired about follow-up and supervision of staff members once they had been trained. Another delegation was also pleased with the progress made and stated that the training initiatives being undertaken by the Fund were impressive. The delegation was encouraged by the incorporation of the logical framework analysis in the Fund's training. The same delegation emphasized the importance of matching people to the jobs that they performed and added that it was also important to obtain retro-feedback, for example, through the 360 degree exercise whereby both managers and subordinate staff assessed each others' performance. Such an exercise was under way in the delegation's country and had proved very useful. The delegation inquired as to what measures had been undertaken to prepare staff for United Nations reform.

283. Noting that the oral report had been very good, one delegation asked if a cost-benefit analysis of training had been undertaken. With regard to the distance-learning package entitled "The Capable Manager", the delegation inquired if the training was tailored to the management of UNFPA, and added that training in accounting and auditing for field staff would be of great benefit. The same delegation emphasized the responsibility of managers to ensure that their staff received training. In particular, training national staff would enable them to take over the functions of the international posts and thus help to reduce UNFPA expenditures. Another delegation observed that training had a lot to do with recruitment and noted that in developing countries there was a shortage of highly qualified people. The delegation wondered if the current emphasis on the provision of training would help to open the way for more recruitment of people from developing countries. Another delegation noted that on a recent field visit to Lebanon, the Executive Board team had been very impressed by the leadership of the UNDP resident representative in empowering the local staff through training. The delegation emphasized that every head of agency in the field should be committed to providing staff training.

284. In his response, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked delegations for their comments and questions. He thanked in particular the delegation of the United Kingdom for the generous financial and technical support that the Government of the United Kingdom had provided to UNFPA for the introduction of the logical framework training. With regard to the evaluation of training in general, he noted that the measure instituted was the performance appraisal review, in the course of which training needs as well as the results of training were assessed. He added that he would be most interested in learning about the experience with retro-training which had been mentioned by another delegate. The Deputy Executive Director noted that the Fund's senior management had discussed the 360 degree exercise and it had been used selectively in the Fund's management training programme but had not yet been applied more generally to the performance appraisal review process. With regard to a cost-benefit analysis of training, he welcomed learning more about an appropriate methodology for it. He observed that the extension of training programmes to the field level facilitated the recruitment of local staff. The Fund had included logframe training for programme managers in recipient countries and hoped to expand training for national counterparts in programme countries. The Deputy Executive Director expressed his appreciation for the positive comments made regarding the key role of the UNDP resident representative in Lebanon in encouraging staff training and added that the resident representative also served as the UNFPA representative.

285. Responding to the query on the logical framework, the Chief of the Office for Personnel and Training noted that the follow-up evaluation of 1997 logframe training had commenced, and questionnaires had been sent out to approximately 50 field office staff who had participated in the training. Responses to the questionnaires received to date indicated that field office staff had formally briefed national counterparts on their return, in the following countries: Algeria, Cambodia, China, Ghana, Lesotho, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. He added that an unprecedented number of country programmes had been submitted in 1997 to the Executive Board for approval, and responses to the questionnaires indicated that the logframe training had proved to be most useful in assisting field staff in developing subprogrammes. UNFPA

Country Support Teams had received logframe training in 1997 and were also provided with training-of-trainer skills to facilitate cascade training. In March 1998, at a regional logframe training workshop for field office staff from the Asia and Pacific region, selected Country Support Team staff from the teams based in Fiji, Nepal and Thailand served as co-trainers. At the request of UNFPA representatives, Country Support Team staff members were also conducting in-country workshops for nationals.

286. The Executive Board took note of the oral report of the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) on the implementation of evaluation recommendations on staff training activities.

IX. UNFPA: RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

287. Following the introduction of this item at the third regular session 1997, the Executive Board had decided to continue consideration of it at its second regular session 1998. The Board had before it the following documents: "Meeting the goals of the ICPD: Consequences of resource shortfalls up to the year 2000" (DP/FPA/1997/12 and DP/FPA/1997/12 (Annex)) and "Mobilizing resources now and for the future: UNFPA's strategy" (DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2).

288. In introducing the conference room paper "Mobilizing resources now and for the future: UNFPA's strategy", the Executive Director noted that it had been prepared at the suggestion of some Board members as a follow-up to the annual donor consultation on resource mobilization, which had taken place on 20 February 1998, at UNFPA headquarters. She noted that the paper reiterated sound resource targets established at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), linked those resource targets to the Fund's resource goals and showed the benefits that would be realized if those targets were met. The paper also provided a general time-frame for UNFPA resource targets, including what would be required for the Fund to absorb the targets it had established, and set forth a series of proposals for strengthening the Fund's resource mobilization efforts. The Executive Director added that the paper reviewed the Fund's resource mobilization strategy and its global communication strategy, both of which were aimed at mobilizing population resources globally from programme and donor countries, as well as from private sources. She stressed that all countries must make a strong effort to reach the financial goals agreed to at ICPD. For UNFPA specifically, the Executive Director asked the Executive Board to help to ensure predictable and increased funding, timely payments, multi-year pledges when possible, as well as early announcement and payment of pledges. She also asked that resource mobilization become an annual agenda item for the Executive Board.

289. The Executive Director then briefly reintroduced the report "Meeting the goals of the ICPD: Consequences of resource shortfalls up to the year 2000" (DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2), which had been presented to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997. She noted that while that report looked at the negative consequences of resource shortfalls, the conference room paper contained a section on the positive consequences of increased resources. She underscored that those were in fact two sides of the same coin and stated that the optimistic scenarios were achievable.

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290. During the ensuing discussion, several delegations expressed their appreciation for the introductory remarks made by the Executive Director and for the documentation that had been provided. Several delegations underscored the importance of ensuring predictable and stable funding for UNFPA and encouraged multi-year pledges. Some delegations noted the need to broaden the Fund's narrow donor base and encouraged UNFPA to diversify its sources of income. Measures proposed in paragraph 23 of document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2 evoked great interest, and several delegations agreed that they should be discussed further. Some delegations noted that multi-year pledges may not be feasible for some countries, owing to current budgetary processes and certain other constraints. Several delegations affirmed that resource mobilization should become an annual agenda item for the Executive Board.

291. One delegation, while commending the Fund for its improving income situation, observed that the income projections in figure 6 of document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2 appeared overly optimistic and asked for background information on the forecasts. With regard to the resource targets and goals agreed to at ICPD, the delegation asked for information on implementation by programme countries and invited donor countries to increase their contributions, especially those wealthy countries that had so far made only modest contributions. The delegation added that donor contributions, both governmental and non-governmental, not channelled through UNFPA should also be taken into consideration. The delegation cautioned that by focusing only on the resource situation too little attention was paid to other key aspects, including the integration of reproductive health. The same delegation proposed that the elements contained in paragraph 23 of document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2 should be addressed during intersessional discussions.

292. Another delegation noted that the approach in document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2 was positive and encouraging and a good basis for building a resource mobilization strategy. The delegation added that the resource figures given in the Programme of Action could not be used as a basis for calculating necessary or hoped-for resources, as Governments might not be able to provide those resources. The delegation added that the Executive Board and secretariat needed to define the specific comparative advantage of UNFPA, as well as the critical mass that the Fund would need to exert a decisive influence on population activities. The same delegation stated that in order to increase external development assistance, more modest increments should be sought, as increments of between 15 and 20 per cent per year tended to discourage donors.

293. Noting the importance of the issue of resource mobilization and the comparative advantage of UNFPA in the population field, one delegation welcomed document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2 as a useful document and added that the delegation still had reservations concerning the methodology and data of the earlier document DP/FPA/1997/12. The delegation stated that the resource figures contained in chapter 14 of the Programme of Action were indicative and should not be regarded as commitments. With reference to document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2, the delegation wondered if the Fund was capable of quadrupling its resources over a four-year period. The delegation asked if it would be possible to look at the impact of increased resources on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and added that that point could be added to the Fund's advocacy programmes. The delegation suggested expanding national committees to other selected countries.

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Observing that paragraph 23 was the most important paragraph in document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2, the delegation stated that its country was prepared to make multi-year commitments and was also prepared to commit itself to certain levels of contributions. Furthermore, as of 1 January 1999, it would be able to make all its contributions in Euro currency. The delegation added that its country would increase its contribution to UNFPA in 1998, with general resources of 6 million French francs and additional bilateral contributions earmarked for African countries, as well as a substantial contribution for the ICPD+5 review process.

294. Another delegation also stated that from 1999 onwards, its contribution would be paid in Euro currency and that its country would increase its contribution to UNFPA, by a substantial amount, in years to come. The delegation hoped that the work being carried out in the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group on a UNDP funding strategy would have a positive outcome and positive implications for the Fund.

295. One delegation affirmed that in order for UNFPA to maintain its viability and continue the efforts to implement the ICPD Programme of Action, a secure financial base was essential. The delegation underscored the importance of multi-bilateral cooperation and noted that with the decentralization of authority to UNFPA country representatives there was a need for closer relationships at the field level between the UNFPA representatives and the embassies of donor countries. Similarly, the relationship with the World Bank and other regional banks was important. The delegation observed that in addition to predictability and continuity of resources, the Fund should also give due consideration to risk management. Given the Fund's dependence on a small group of donors, it was exposed to a high risk of being affected by changes in the economic climate of individual donor countries, including through currency fluctuations. Thus, diversification of the Fund's currency portfolio and its donor base were important. The delegation stated that the work of the UNDP working group on funding should not be duplicated by the Fund.

296. Welcoming the Fund's endeavour to assess the implications of the consequences of resource shortfalls, one delegation stated that all those committed to the ICPD Programme of Action must assist in its implementation and in minimizing the negative impact of resource shortfalls. The delegation noted that its country strongly supported continued efforts to narrow the gap in resources and would participate fully in the process within UNFPA and elsewhere. While observing that its budgetary process constrained such actions as multi-year pledges and minimum resource commitments, the delegation stated that progress had been made on the early payment of its contributions to UNFPA and hoped that would continue. The same delegation noted that it had a few technical issues concerning the report (DP/FPA/1997/12) and it would submit those in writing.

297. Underscoring the importance of developing a new system of predictable financing for UNFPA, one delegation stated that a resource mobilization strategy should contain several components, including attention to the private sector. Key elements of a resource mobilization strategy should include: multi-year pledges to assure a predictable resource base; a clear link between the approval of the programme budget and the resource base to assure a strong role of the

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Executive Board; and multilateral negotiations on the total budget and burden sharing on an equitable basis. The delegation added that it fully supported all measures to strengthen resource mobilization outlined in paragraph 23 of document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2, including multi-year pledges. The delegation proposed a four-step process for member States towards achieving broad agreement: informal intersessional meetings of the Executive Board to discuss the financing and resource mobilization issues before the annual session, with UNFPA reporting to the Executive Board on the outcome of those meetings; a substantive discussion of the issues at the annual session, when a larger number of representatives from capitals were present; a final decision on the subject to be taken at the third regular session; and a commitment at a political level expressed at the General Assembly Special Session on ICPD+5 in June 1999.

298. One delegation noted that with regard to the methodology used for data collection in the report DP/FPA/1997/12, it would be useful to add the support provided for the development of health systems, which was in line with the ICPD Programme of Action, but did not always show up in data on population spending. The delegation stated that the amount of donor assistance channelled through UNFPA would depend on the Fund's ability to demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of its programmes. The same delegation added that its country would be willing to consider the proposal on multi-year pledges and noted that it had recently increased its financial support to UNFPA and would seek to continue that trend.

299. Another delegation, commenting on document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2, reiterated the importance it attached to a solid financial basis for UNFPA and noted that, for budgetary reasons, it would be unable to make multi-year pledges; however, it encouraged those donors in a position to make such pledges, to do so. The delegation stated that according to its understanding, the suggestion to link multi-year pledges to annual increases in contributions meant a deviation from the principle of voluntary contributions, to which it strongly adhered. The delegation noted that the Fund's suggestion to conclude formal agreements with major donors would endanger the principle of multilateralism. The same delegation observed that for budgetary reasons, it was not in a position to comply with the suggestion made in the report to lessen the impact of fluctuating exchange rates. With the introduction of the Euro currency, exchange rate fluctuations would certainly be reduced. The delegation stated that it had an essential difficulty in accepting the methodological approach used in the paper on the consequences of resource shortfalls (DP/FPA/1997/12) and added that the figures in table 3 for its country were incorrect. According to its understanding, the fund's own definition of donor assistance for population included not only reproductive health in the strict sense of the term but extended to the related issues. The figures given in table 3, however, omitted those other issues. The delegation welcomed the convening of a conference in May at the Hague to discuss the methodological difficulties in data collection.

300. One delegation underlined that it was important for the Fund to continue its bilateral cooperation with donors and encouraged UNFPA to work more closely with parliamentarians and regional banks. The delegation was pleased to note that UNFPA was increasing partnerships with non-traditional donors, including the private sector. The same delegation stressed that there was an important

correlation between resource mobilization and utilization and that attention should be focused on the use of resources as well. Another delegation, while appreciating the Fund's efforts to mobilize alternative and additional support, stated that the emphasis should be on increasing core funding. The delegation added that fund-raising targets should be viewed in conjunction with productive utilization of resources.

301. One delegation, while noting its country's full commitment to the new population paradigm that emerged at ICPD, stated that its national population programme was largely financed through domestic resources. The delegation added that the recent regional meeting of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in March, in Bangkok, Thailand, had acknowledged the growing contribution of developing countries in implementing the Programme of Action through greater mobilization of domestic resources. The delegation observed that unfortunately that increase had not been accompanied by an increase in external resources as envisaged at the ICPD. The delegation asked for further information on debt-for-population swaps, specifically: How would the brokerage role of UNFPA result in increased resources for the Fund? Would the swap increase domestic resources for population activities and would that be conditional? Would swaps apply only to non-performing debts or also to those that were being serviced and repaid on time? What were the Fund's comparative advantages in becoming a financial broker between Governments or between Governments and other multilateral public creditors? Had the Fund implemented any such debt swaps?

302. Another delegation associated itself with the delegation that had noted that developing countries were mobilizing domestic resources to meet the ICPD resource goals and that resource shortfalls were a consequence of decreasing official development assistance. The delegation urged donors to be forthcoming in their contributions to UNFPA. Another delegation also recognized the efforts of developing countries in moving towards national financing in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. Noting the importance of burden sharing and the need to tap emerging donors, the delegation observed that a funding strategy should go beyond fund-raising. The delegation asked about the decrease in the Fund's total population assistance and wondered if enough were being done in Africa in terms of commitments and programme delivery.

303. Another delegation also underlined the need for donors to be forthcoming on contributions and added that UNFPA should increase its efforts to raise the profile of population issues in donor countries and should also make known the Fund's many achievements. The same delegation further noted that in focusing its efforts on the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the Fund should not forget the needs of the countries of Central America. Some of those countries had higher birth rates than some countries in sub-Saharan Africa and faced other major population challenges. Another delegation wondered if it would be possible to make some savings among other United Nations funds and programmes and provide add-ons to UNFPA. The delegation added that private-sector funding merited consideration.

304. One delegation asked for additional information on alternative funding sources, including the practicability of debt-for-population swaps and added that, with reference to paragraph 23 (d) in document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2,

establishing floor and ceiling limits for contributions might not be feasible, given the need to go through a parliamentary approval system in several countries.

305. In her response, the Executive Director stated that she was very pleased and encouraged by the comments and questions raised by the delegations as they clearly indicated the seriousness with which Governments were considering the issue of resource mobilization. She noted that UNFPA was engaged in efforts to expand its current donor base and had identified countries where added efforts were needed to secure contributions. In that regard, she requested the collective support of the Executive Board. She added that the Fund was also seeking the involvement of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. With regard to linkage between resource mobilization and utilization, the Executive Director observed that the Fund had taken that into consideration, noting that its earlier paper on programme priorities had delineated that linkage. On the question of the Fund's specific area of comparative advantage, she stated that with regard to reproductive health, UNFPA was the main operational organization providing support to reproductive health, including sexual health and family planning. In the population and development field, UNFPA was the main advocate for putting population issues on the agenda of other organizations. Furthermore, advocacy for reproductive health still appeared to be the domain of the Fund and UNFPA could take credit for having made the concept universally accepted. The Executive Director added that the next step was to get development partners to move beyond acceptance of the concept to actual delivery of reproductive health services.

306. With regard to the figures provided in figure 6 of document DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2, she noted that the projections of what UNFPA could utilize were realistic and the Fund could deliver the programmes effectively. The Executive Director added that the carry-over in 1997 had been much lower compared to other years and explained that because of resource uncertainties not all funds were implemented. Frequently, UNFPA received contributions at the end of the year and those funds could not be programmed fully earlier in the year. She underscored the importance of having stable and predictable funding. The Executive Director noted that there should also be greater flexibility allowed in using the operational reserve and added that in spite of various uncertainties, UNFPA had managed its resources judiciously. She hoped that the Fund would be able to get additional development partners from the private and non-governmental sectors.

307. The Executive Director thanked the donors who had increased their contributions to the Fund and others who had paid their contributions in full. She was pleased that some delegations had announced that their future contributions would be in Euro currency. She agreed that it was important to emphasize expanding core funding. She observed that since the Fund's work was well defined, resource mobilization modalities and levels could be worked out in a dialogue with the Executive Board, and should not be mixed with the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group on a UNDP funding strategy. She added that the Fund would refine the conference room paper based on the comments and suggestions of the Board members. The Executive Director concluded by emphasizing the need to meet

the ICPD goals not just for resources but for implementing the Programme of Action.

308. On the matter of debt swap, the Director, Information and External Relations Division, noted that it was another vehicle to operationalize the Programme of Action and represented a win-win situation for both the lender and borrower. He stated that bilateral debt amounted to $800 billion and that was what the Fund was seeking to tap. He observed that UNFPA would like to broker the deals. With regard to the workings of a debt swap, he noted that a lender would forgive a portion of a debt provided that the borrower would invest a set amount in local currency for population and other social programming in the borrower's own country. That would help the lender meet the ICPD Programme of Action obligation, without utilizing foreign currency, and would advance population and social development goals. He added that the Fund had not yet conducted any debt swaps but was currently discussing them with three countries.

309. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

98/7. Resource mobilization strategy for the United Nations Population Fund

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on Mobilizing Resources Now and for the Future: UNFPA's Strategy (DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2);

2. Invites the Executive Director to update the conference room paper on Mobilizing Resources Now and for the Future: UNFPA's Strategy (DP/FPA/1998/CRP.2) and to report to the Executive Board at its annual session 1998;

3. Requests the Executive Director to organize informal intersessional meetings of the Board with a view to reviewing various funding mechanisms for the United Nations Population Fund and also requests the Executive Director to report to the Board on progress made in the informal intersessional meetings with a view to adopting at its third regular session 1998 a decision on a sustainable funding strategy that will place the funding of the United Nations Population Fund on a predictable, assured and continuous basis so as to enable it to play a central role in the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

24 April 1998

X. OTHER MATTERS

Progress report on change management

310. The Administrator delivered an update on UNDP 2001 implementation. He noted that the pace of implementing the 2001 package of change had gained further momentum and had become an integral part of the organization's overall

culture, including cost consciousness, stronger accountability and a sharper focus at the country level.

311. Individual accountability for results had been strongly emphasized in the development of the reform package, with clear lines of accountability established from the resident representative to the regional bureau director, and from the regional bureau director to the Associate Administrator and to the Administrator. Compacts had been signed with all managers who reported to the Administrator directly and between regional bureau directors and their resident representatives. The compacts established managers' accountability for measurable results, defined the support needed to achieve the results, and built in objective measurements to assess performance.

312. The compacts also formed the basis of the 1998 Strategic Plan (DP/1998/CRP.7), distributed to the Executive Board on an informal basis at the present session. The Strategic Plan established priorities and enabled monitoring of progress in achieving the UNDP mandate and the use of resources. The Plan would be a living tool that the Executive Board could use to monitor the organization's overall progress and to hold the Administrator accountable for results.

313. Support to the Secretary-General's reform proposals was a key dimension of the internal reform efforts of UNDP. Support to the implementation of the Secretary-General's initiatives had been established as a strategic priority objective in each compact signed with senior managers and was reflected in both the Strategic Plan and in the updated Implementation Plan for UNDP 2001.

314. Results of UNDP 2001 included the completion of work on country office management indicators, with a system operational by June. The indicators were an integral component of the UNDP 2001 concept of holistic oversight and were a corollary of the move to greater delegation and emphasis on ex post monitoring and assessment, rather than ex ante approval. The indicators would enable headquarters and all resident representatives to learn from the experiences of others and to facilitate the sharing of best practices. Management indicators for headquarters units would be produced by September. Work on selected programme performance indicators in the areas of poverty and governance had been initiated. A workshop with 20 country offices was planned for May 1998, after which the indicators would be piloted in selected countries. Measuring impact and results was a key area for the organization.

315. Other results included the implementation of the new accountability framework, beginning with the launching of a control risk self-assessment programme and the release of a handbook by the Evaluation Office on results-oriented monitoring and evaluation.

316. The establishment of the subregional resource facilities (SURFs), expected to be completed by the end of summer 1998, was proceeding, with staff for the five regional SURFs and the Global Hub at headquarters under recruitment. The Bureau for Development Policy was working on common systems and standards while staff in the five regions were working to identify expertise and best practices. A full status report on the SURFs would be available at the annual session 1998.

317. Other steps taken to ensure that UNDP would become a learning organization included the distribution of the UNDP Resource Guide on Change Management to country offices and refinement of systems to support decentralization, particularly in the areas of human resources and financial resource management. An information management strategy would ensure the alignment of information management resources with the overall UNDP corporate strategy.

318. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that he was according high priority to developing a competency-based human resource strategy. Clarity on roles and functions would help to empower UNDP staff at all levels and encourage them to contribute to the challenges of the next century. Training and performance appraisal for resident coordinators, using the competency-based approach, had already been introduced. The first comprehensive national staff management policy would be implemented in May 1998. The new UNDP policy on gender and the advancement of women had been reviewed by the Executive Committee and its implementation mainstreamed in the compacts signed with managers. A roster of emergency personnel had been established to respond better to the needs of programme countries in times of crisis.

319. Headquarters units had proceeded to streamline unwieldy processes. In March 1998, the new national execution manual, which reflected Executive Board decisions taken at the first regular session 1998, was introduced and distributed to the country offices. An efficiency and decentralization package would be brought to the Change Implementation Committee in May 1998.

320. UNDP was thus moving forward vigorously in the implementation of UNDP 2001. A detailed update of the UNDP 2001 Implementation Plan was available to the Board at the present session, as was a brochure entitled UNDP Today.

321. One delegation queried whether the change management process and its progress in human resource and financial issues could be linked to the funding issues and if that link could ensure maximum programme delivery.

322. Another speaker thanked the Administrator for his presentation and requested further information on the evaluation of resident representatives. The delegation also queried whether there were specific measures to ensure gender equality in recruitment.

323. The Administrator, in response to the first speaker, stated that UNDP would reflect on the point made and revert to it in the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on a Funding Strategy for UNDP. He stated that the establishment of country office management indicators, including the evaluation of resident representatives, was a huge undertaking that drew on the experience of the performance assessment review process. He noted that major steps had been taken with regard to gender equality and recruitment, including the measure that external recruitment would be limited to women only with exceptions at the discretion of the Administrator.

324. The Associate Administrator noted the improvements in the operations side of UNDP on the basis of the compacts signed with the respective bureaux. Synergies on various issues had been developed and experiences shared on an inter-bureau basis.

325. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau of Planning and Resource Management looked forward to discussing the issues raised by the first speaker at the Open-Ended Working Group. He noted that the new UNDP organization chart allowed for greater alignment between human resources and change management, with the Office of Human Resources now part of the Bureau of Planning and Resource Management. There was an investment or cost in organizational change, in terms of the energy put into projects and the financial investment. Investments in human resources were needed in order to align UNDP with the changing demands in crisis countries. Additional resources were also needed with regard to human resource development.

326. The Executive Board took note of the Administrator's oral report on change management.

Statement by the Chairman of the Commission on Social Development

327. The Chairman of the Commission on Social Development addressed the Executive Board on the outcome of the Commission's thirty-sixth session, held from 10-20 February 1998, in particular on the agreed conclusions contained in decision 36/2: "Promoting Social Integration and Participation of All People, Including Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups and Persons". Other activities of the Commission included preparations for the United Nations International Year for Older Persons (1999) and preparations for the review in the year 2000 of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. He underlined the importance of disseminating the work of the Commission to as wide an audience as possible.

328. One delegation took the floor to welcome the briefing on the activities of the Commission on Social Development relevant to UNDP and UNFPA.

329. The Executive Board took note of the presentation by the Chairman of the Commission on Social Development.

ICPD+5

330. At the request of several members of the Board, the ICPD+5 process was further considered under agenda item 9.

331. The Executive Director informed the Board that UNFPA and the United Nations Population Division were working on an annotated outline of the report of the Secretary-General that would be submitted to the Special Session of the General Assembly. She noted that the report would be brief and would focus on: where we are today in implementing the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action; constraints; and key actions for the future. While the report would discuss qualitative and quantitative aspects of the goals achieved and the constraints faced, it would not attempt to address every chapter of the Programme of Action individually. Instead, key issues and themes would be clustered and examined in a combined way, with a focus on illustrating the inter-connectedness of various sectors. The report would also delineate how the United Nations system and other development partners had come together to implement the ICPD Programme of Action. The Fund and the Population Division

were also preparing a progress report for presentation to the Economic and Social Council in July 1998, on preparations for the ICPD+5 review.

332. The Executive Director added that the document for the International Forum would be more extensive and detailed than the report of the Secretary-General. The review and assessment report being prepared by the Population Division, as well as the outcomes of the regional meetings, the round tables and the technical meetings would all feed into the document for the International Forum. She noted that NGOs and civil society organizations were involved in the preparatory process and a two-day NGO Forum would precede the International Forum. The topic of adolescent reproductive health would receive attention. Since ICPD, youth had become actively involved and had asked that their voices be heard in both the ICPD+5 preparatory process and at the International Forum. The Fund was committed to ensuring that. The Executive Director noted that there was good collaboration with NGOs and, increasingly, environmental groups and groups of retirees and older persons were seeking to liaise with UNFPA on the ICPD+5 process. She stated that Governments had expressed keen interest in the ICPD+5 review.

Coordinating Committee on Health

333. In her opening statement to the Executive Board, the Executive Director had provided an update on the status of preparations for the first meeting of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH). The meeting would take place on 3 and 4 July 1998 in Geneva. The provisional agenda for the meeting included: review of the terms of reference for the Committee; review of resolutions and decisions of the three Executive Boards relating to improving the health of children, young people and women, adopted since the thirty-first session of the Joint Committee on Health Policy, the predecessor of the CCH; adolescent health; safe motherhood; and the results of a vitamin A study. The meeting would culminate a two-year process of continuous, concerted and constructive efforts on the part of the Executive Boards of the three organizations.

334. Following consideration of the nomination of the Africa region representative to the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health for 1998, the Executive Board confirmed Dr. John Katatu Musiyimi Mulva, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Botswana, as the representative of the African Group on the Committee, and Ms. Winnie Gasefele Manyeneng, Assistant Director of Health Services/Primary Health Care, Botswana, as the alternate.

Closing remarks by the Administrator

335. The Administrator extended his gratitude to all who had been involved with the session. He cited the dialogues on the reports to the Economic and Social Council and on the country cooperation frameworks as particularly valuable. The informal meeting with the UNICEF Executive Board had been a useful continuation of the mechanism begun in January. He hoped that the Board could continue to utilize such forums for discussion of the implementation of United Nations reform. The Administrator wished a departing representative of France, Mr. Jean-Marc Chaitagner, best wishes for his new assignment.

Closing remarks by the Executive Director

336. In her concluding remarks, the Executive Director expressed her thanks and deep appreciation to the President, the Bureau and all members of the Executive Board for the constructive dialogue and the guidance they had provided. She observed that the second regular session 1998 of the Board, which had focused primarily on UNFPA items, had yielded positive results, and the discussions during the week had clearly shown the great interest of the Executive Board in UNFPA matters. She noted that she was very pleased with the high quality of the dialogue, level of participation and the professional and focused attention given to UNFPA matters at the second regular session. She further noted that the Executive Board and the secretariat had developed a positive and constructive relationship and worked towards the same goals.

337. The Executive Director added that while she sincerely appreciated the great interest of the Executive Board in all UNFPA matters, it should also be kept in mind that preparing for sessions of the Executive Board required a great deal of staff time and effort and that UNFPA had a very small secretariat. In particular, the preparation of documentation might not always be the best use of staff time. At the same time, the Executive Director recognized that on some issues there had been a feeling among some delegations that the Fund had not shared enough information in advance of the meeting; UNFPA intended to correct that in the future and welcomed the guidance of the Board in that regard. She added that the discussion on resource mobilization was a good illustration of the Fund's open and constructive relationship with the Board, and despite the fact that some members had difficulties with some of the proposals, the frank and constructive tone of the dialogue was outstanding. The Executive Director also noted that the discussion on the report to the Economic and Social Council had been useful, and UNFPA would try to follow the guidance provided by the Board for the preparation of a note on consolidated issues, with UNDP, and, if possible with the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme. She added that the joint informal meeting on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework had been very useful. She noted that the Fund would continue to work on all issues that were of interest to the Board, including the technical support services and resource mobilization.

338. The Executive Director stated that she wished to express her deep appreciation to the Executive Board for the authorization that it had given to UNFPA to proceed with the recruitment of seven new posts in the field. She then went on to thank Mr. Jean-Marc Chataigner of the delegation of France, who would shortly be taking up new duties. She underscored that it was to a great extent due to his support and personal commitment that UNFPA had such excellent relations with the Government of France. The Executive Director then expressed her deep gratitude to Mr. Per-Ola Mattson of the delegation of Sweden for his support and excellent guidance, and hoped that he would continue to be involved in UNFPA and population matters in his new posting. She also thanked Mr. Yutaka Yoshino of the delegation of Japan for all the support that he had given the Fund and she wished him the best in his new undertakings. The Executive Director concluded by thanking the President and the members of the Bureau for efficiently guiding the deliberations. She thanked all members of the Board for an excellent session and also conveyed her thanks to the

interpreters, conference officers and all the secretariat staff, including UNDP colleagues, for their very able and dedicated assistance.

Closing remarks by the President

339. The President noted that the session had been very productive, with the adoption of 10 UNDP country cooperation frameworks and extensions of three country programmes, and 26 UNFPA country programmes and one extension. The discussions on country-level programming had been very constructive and informative. The Executive Board had taken decisions on such key issues as the reports to the Economic and Social Council, UNFPA technical support services, the recruitment of UNFPA country representatives and a resource mobilization strategy for UNFPA. He also cited the useful informal meetings, convened by both UNDP and UNFPA as well as the joint informal meeting convened with the UNICEF Executive Board. Dialogue on reform-related issues such as the UNDAF had been held at both the joint informal and during the dialogue on the reports to the Economic and Social Council. The joint meetings would be continued as and when needed. The progress in fulfilling the elements of the key decisions taken during the session would be closely monitored.

340. The Executive Board concluded its work by adopting the following decision:

98/9. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1998

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the second regular session 1998 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its second regular session 1998 (DP/1998/L.2) as orally amended;

Approved the report on the first regular session 1998 (DP/1998/12 and Corr.1);

Approved that part of the report on the second regular session (contained in documents DP/1998/L.15 and DP/1998/L.16) concerning the reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1998/14 and Corr.1 and DP/FPA/1998/2 and Corr.1 (French only));

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998 and 1999 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Annual session 1998:	**8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)**
Third regular session 1998:	**14-18 September 1998**
First regular session 1999:	**25-29 January 1999**
Second regular session 1999:	**5-9 April 1999**
Annual session 1998:	**14-25 June 1999 (New York)**
Third regular session 1999:	**13-17 September 1999**

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the annual session 1998 of the Board, as listed in the annexed work plan;

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UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 2: REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Adopted decision 98/5 of 24 April 1998 on the reports to the Economic and Social Council;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 3: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Took note of the report on the three-year financial forecast outlining the financial commitments as of 31 December 1997 (DP/1998/CRP.6);

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks and country programme extensions:

I

First country cooperation framework for Côte d'Ivoire (DP/CCF/IVC/1);
First country cooperation framework for Gambia (DP/CCF/GAM/1);
First country cooperation framework for Guinea (DP/CCF/GUI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Mali (DP/CCF/MLI/1 and Corr.1 (English only));
First country cooperation framework for Rwanda (DP/CCF/RWA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Togo (DP/CCF/TOG/1);
First extension of the fifth country programme for Niger (DP/CP/NER/5/EXTENSION I);

II

First country cooperation framework for Bahrain (DP/CCF/BAH/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Albania (DP/CCF/ALB/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for Bolivia (DP/CCF/BOL/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Turks and Caicos Islands (DP/CCF/TCI/1);
Second extension of the third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda (DP/CP/ANT/3/EXTENSION II);
Second extension of the fifth country programme for Haiti (DP/CP/HAI/5/EXTENSION II);

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 4: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the following country programmes:

I

Assistance to the Government of Botswana (DP/FPA/BWA/3);
Assistance to the Government of Cameroon (DP/FPA/CMR/3);
Assistance to the Government of Equatorial Guinea (DP/FPA/GNQ/3);
Assistance to the Government of Ethiopia (DP/FPA/ETH/4);
Assistance to the Government of Gabon (DP/FPA/GAB/3);
Assistance to the Government of Guinea-Bissau (DP/FPA/GNB/3);
Assistance to the Government of Lesotho (DP/FPA/LSO/3);
Assistance to the Government of Mali (DP/FPA/MLI/4 and Corr.1 (French only));
Assistance to the Government of Mauritania (DP/FPA/MRT/4);
Assistance to the Government of Mozambique (DP/FPA/MOZ/5);
Assistance to the Government of Niger (DP/FPA/NER/4);
Assistance to the Government of Rwanda (DP/FPA/RWA/4);
Assistance to the Government of Sao Tome and Principe (DP/FPA/STP/3);
Assistance to the Government of South Africa (DP/FPA/ZAF/1);
Assistance to the Government of Swaziland (DP/FPA/SWZ/3 and Corr.1 (French only));

II

Assistance to the Government of Jordan (DP/FPA/JOR/5);
Assistance to the Government of Yemen (DP/FPA/YEM/2);

III

Assistance to the Government of Bangladesh (DP/FPA/BGD/5);
Assistance to the Government of Bhutan (DP/FPA/BTN/3);
Assistance to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DP/FPA/PRK/3);
Extension of assistance to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/FPA/IRN/2/EXT1);
Assistance to the Government of Maldives (DP/FPA/MDV/2);
Assistance to the Government of Papua New Guinea (DP/FPA/PNG/2 and Corr.1 (French only));
Assistance to the Government of Thailand (DP/FPA/THA/7);

IV

Assistance to the Government of Bolivia (DP/FPA/BOL/2);
Assistance to the Government of Brazil (DP/FPA/BRA/2);
Assistance to the Government of Colombia (DP/FPA/COL/3);

ITEM 5: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Took note of the oral report on the criteria and mechanisms for budget adjustments in the event of any significant shortfall in income (97/26);

Adopted decision 98/8 of 24 April 1998 on approval of recruitment of UNFPA country representatives;

ITEM 6: TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Adopted decision 98/6 of 24 April 1998 on UNFPA technical support services;

ITEM 7: STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Took note of the oral report on the implementation of evaluation recommendations (97/29) on UNFPA staff training activities;

ITEM 8: RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Adopted decision 98/7 of 24 April 1998 on a resource mobilization strategy for the United Nations Population Fund;

ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS

Took note of the progress report on change management;

Confirmed the nomination of Botswana from the African Group to represent the Executive Board on the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

Took note of the presentation of the Chairman of the Commission on Social Development.

24 April 1998

Table 1. Annual session 1998 (8-19 June 1998)

(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1998/L.3)	A	1½ days	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A		Report on the second regular session 1998
				Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1998
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official	I		REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1997
				Introduction by the Executive Director
				Programme priorities and implementation
				Resource mobilization
				Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme/Global Initiative on Contraceptive Requirements
				Regional overview
				Statistical annex
3	Official	A	½ day	ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY AND FINANCIAL RESOURCE UTILIZATION (96/27)
4	Official	A	½ day	WORK PLAN AND REQUEST FOR PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY
5	Official	I	½ day	PERIODIC REPORT ON EVALUATION

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
6			½ day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
	Oral	I		Implementation of decision 97/13
7	Oral/CRP	I		RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY
				UNDP SEGMENT
8			2 days	ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A		Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A		Main programme record, including reporting on special funds
	Official	I		Assistance to the Palestinian people
	Official	I		The United Nations New Agenda for Development in Africa and the Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I		Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit
	Official	I		Statistical annex
	CRP	I		UNDP 2001: Follow-up to decision 97/15 para 16 (Interim report on subregional resource facilities(SURFs))
9	Official	I	½ day	Follow-up to the United Nations Reform, including transfer to the United Nations Development Programme of the responsibilities of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness
10	Official	I	½ day	EVALUATION
11	Official	I/A	½ day	UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS

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Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
12	CRP		½ day	RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (including review of round-table process)
13	Official		½ day	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS (including assistance to Myanmar)
14			½ day	COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION POLICY
	Official	I		Follow-up to decision 97/17 (para 10)
15				UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
	Official			Report on follow-up to recommendations of the Board of Auditors on UNOPS (97/23)
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
16	Oral	I	½ day	Reports on internal oversight
17			½ day	OTHER MATTERS, including:
				- Briefing on UNAIDS
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* **NOTE:** A Special Event on 1998 State of World Population report will be organized by UNFPA for half a day.

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.
